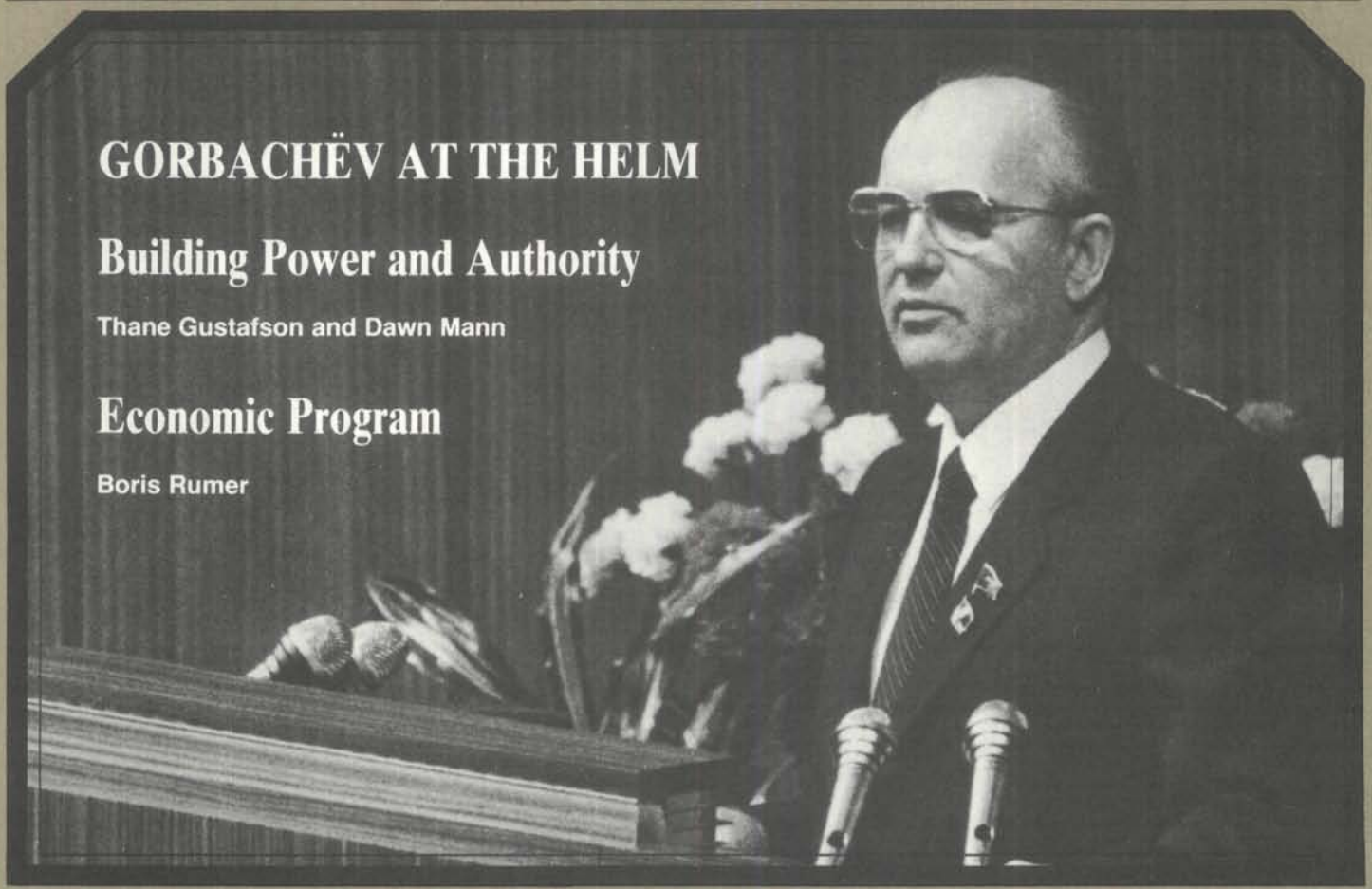
Problems of Communism

Book Reviews

John A. Baker
David Childs

MAY-JUNE 1986



GORBACHËV AT THE HELM

Building Power and Authority

Thane Gustafson and Dawn Mann

Economic Program

Boris Rumer

Imre Nagy and Moscow, 1953-56

Charles Gati

Moscow and South Yemen

David Pollock

NOTE

Watching China's Military: A Personal View

Harlan W. Jencks

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Problems of Communism

3

MAY-JUNE 1986 VOL XXXV

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1 Gorbachëv's First Year: Building Power and Authority
by Thane Gustafson and Dawn Mann

20 Realities of Gorbachëv's Economic Program
by Boris Rumer

32 Imre Nagy & Moscow, 1953-56
by Charles Gati

50 Moscow and Aden: Coping with a Coup
by David Pollock

NOTE

71 Watching China's Military: A Personal View
by Harlan W. Jencks

BOOKS

79 PCI Weighs Soviet Foreign Policy
by John A. Baker

85 GDR Dichotomies
by David Childs

90 Correspondence

Cover: General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachëv addresses delegates at the opening session of the 27th Party Congress on February 25, 1986. Photo by TASS from SOVFOTO.

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IN THIS ISSUE OF

Problems of Communism

Articles

Gorbachëv's First Year: Building Power and Authority

Thane Gustafson and Dawn Mann

In his first year as general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachëv has gone a long way toward restoring the power of his office. The time was opportune to instigate a heavy turnover of cadres, and he seized the opportunity. But his power needs to be reinforced by authority, which is contingent on a viable program. Gorbachëv's economic blueprint for the Soviet Union contains some serious inherent contradictions. Their resolution will necessitate hard choices that will test Gorbachëv's strategy for building both power and authority.

Realities of Gorbachëv's Economic Program

Boris Rumer

Mikhail Gorbachëv's program to get the Soviet economy moving seems to differ little from the failed efforts of his predecessors. The effort to renovate and modernize existing production capacities is likely to founder because of insufficient output of machinery, and even if successful, would aggravate geographic imbalances in the economy. Measures to further centralize planning while decentralizing line decision-making will accomplish little without realistic pricing. More fundamentally, the continued primacy given to political power in the USSR stands in the way of intensification and rationalization of the economy.

Imre Nagy and Moscow, 1953-56

Charles Gati

The unfolding drama of the 1956 Hungarian revolution showed vividly flexibility, as well as duplicity and confusion, in Soviet policy-making. The decisions on Hungary made by Soviet leaders after Stalin's death in 1953 were largely influenced by their own infighting over the policy course at home. As Imre Nagy was trying to shape a popular revolution in Hungary into a form acceptable to Moscow, he eventually realized that he had been duped by the Soviet leadership. Only then did he emancipate himself from Moscow's tutelage and so became the symbol and hero of the Hungarian revolution.

Moscow and Aden: Coping with a Coup

David Pollock

Two weeks of bloody fighting in January 1986 ousted President Ali Nasir Muhammad of the People's Democratic Republic of [South] Yemen, the only avowedly Marxist state, and closest ally of the Soviet Union, in the Arab world. This latest link in a long chain of violent internal political crises in Aden offers an instructive illustration of acute factional rivalry within Marxist Third World regimes, and of assertive Soviet responses to it. In South Yemen as elsewhere, the Soviets appear to have underestimated, at considerable cost, the enduring force of factional, tribal, and indeed national loyalties underlying an imported ideological veneer.

(Abstracts continued on reverse side)

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Note

Watching China's Military: A Personal View

Harlan W. Jencks

Although the volume of material written about Chinese military affairs has expanded exponentially in recent years, much of it has been of poor quality. Little is known about how Chinese military decisions are made, and access to Chinese military installations is still extremely limited. Yet, there is a small corps of serious and qualified China specialists, known collectively as China military watchers, who publish informative and insightful studies on Chinese military affairs.

Essay-reviews

PCI Weighs Soviet Foreign Policy

John A. Baker

The Italian Communist Party (PCI), which had differentiated itself from the Soviet domestic model of socialism after 1956, was slow in breaking with the Soviet foreign policy line. Not until 1980-81, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, did PCI Secretary General Enrico Berlinguer voice his devastating critique of Soviet foreign policy as a "policy of power." Recent studies indicate that today the PCI elite holds varying views on Soviet foreign policy, ranging from those approximating Berlinguer's critique and supporting the PCI's estrangement from the Soviet Union, to those less critical of Soviet policy and aiming for rapprochement between the PCI and the CPSU.

GDR Dichotomies

David Childs

Life in the German Democratic Republic, according to official GDR media, is getting better and better. There are new victories on the production front, more homes built, more teachers trained, more books published. To some, however, "real existing socialism" in East Germany has meant the creation of an unreal world by the media, the failure of an economic system, the preponderance of special privilege, and the hypocrisy of "democratic centralism."

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Gorbachëv's First Year: Building Power and Authority

Thane Gustafson and Dawn Mann

Mikhail Gorbachëv has now been General Secretary of the CPSU for more than a year. It is still much too soon to take his measure as a leader, but it is not too soon to begin analyzing his strategy for building power and authority. How does his approach differ from that of his predecessors? What does it tell us about the political resources available to a general secretary in the third generation of the Soviet system?

The most fundamental question about any political system is how power is derived and distributed in it. Yet among observers of the Soviet polity, no question is less settled. Western writings a generation ago stressed the crucial importance of control over party cadres. For example, Zbigniew Brzezinski noted:

In the Soviet Union the division of power means the sharing of a single resource: control over the Party organization. . . . Industrial authority, scientific knowledge, military expertise, national popularity, personal wealth, ethnic group support, are neither autonomous nor deployable on the plains of politics in the same manner [as in other systems].[1]

Yet, while Nikita Khrushchev's control over the "cadres weapon" remained intact to the end, it did not save him from being overthrown. And under Leonid Brezhnev this instrument of power appeared to erode, both in frequency and effectiveness of use. Wrestling to reconcile such facts, Western scholars over the last 20 years have attempted to assess the changes in the sources of power in Soviet politics.[2]

Their main theses can be summed up in this way: the range of resources for power has broadened, and some of Brzezinski's "non-deployable resources" have become factors that general secretaries must now reckon with. Unwritten conventions on promotion and representation have come to limit a general secretary's choices in applying the cadres weapon. The distribution of political forces has shifted: the party apparatus in the provinces matters less, while the major state institutions in Moscow have increased their presence and influence. The end result is oligarchy rather than one-man rule, a politics of accommodation instead of dictate. The power of any one general secretary may increase the longer he serves, but the

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[1]Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Power, USA/USSR*, New York, Viking, 1964, pp. 194–95.

[2]See especially Grey Hodnett, "The Pattern of Leadership Politics," in Seweryn Bialer, Ed., *The Domestic Sources of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1980, pp. 87–118; T. H. Rigby, "A Conceptual Approach to Authority, Power, and Policy in the Soviet Union," in T. H. Rigby, Archie Brown, and Peter Reddaway, Eds., *Authority, Power, and Policy in the USSR*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1980, pp. 9–31; and Paul Cocks, "The Rationalization of Party Control," in Chalmers Johnson, Ed., *Change in Communist Systems*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1970, pp. 153–90.

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long-term trend is for the power of successive general secretaries to decline,[3] while that of various groups rises.[4]

A distinct but complementary line of analysis holds that Western scholars have consistently exaggerated the role of *power* in Soviet politics while neglecting that of *authority*. The essential strategy for a general secretary is to convince the political elite of the legitimacy of his policy programs and of his own competence or indispensability as a leader, and thus to build the necessary consensus for effective rule.[5] In this view, the office of general secretary was weakened because its incumbent was unable to build lasting authority.

The "new views" left several questions unresolved. First, how can effective authority exist without power? Thus, the real challenge is to understand the relationship between the two. Second, was the decline of the general secretary's power necessarily permanent? T. H. Rigby, drawing on Max Weber's typology of authority, reminded his readers that the Soviet bureaucracy exists not to apply rules but to meet targets. Therefore, the Soviet system always retains the potential to favor a charismatic leader.[6] Third, were scholars erecting into laws of Soviet politics what in fact were the products of Brezhnev's personality and the circumstances under which he came to power? By 1982, after 18 years of Brezhnev's "stability of cadres," the political elite was evidently less afraid of a strong leader than it was desirous of one.

This was more or less the state of Western discussions at the time Brezhnev died. Yuriy Andropov's accession and the changes he launched in his 15 months in office suggested how much might still be achieved by a general secretary with an effective strategy for building power and authority.[7] This potential has been the special fascination of Gorbachëv's first year.

I. BUILDING POWER

Not since the 1930's has there been so vast a turnover of the Soviet political and administrative elite in so short a time. In the Politburo and in the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers, a majority of today's membership was either moved in or up in less than a year.[8] In the Council of Ministers as a whole, 39 of the 101 members of March 1985 are gone,[9] while in the Central Committee, 14 of 23 heads of department have been replaced.

Outside the central apparatus, the first secretaryship has changed hands in 24 of 72 second-order party committees (Moscow city, 6 krays, 49 oblasts, and 16 autonomous republics) in the Russian Republic (RSFSR), and in 23 of 78 similar committees in the non-Russian republics.[10] Four out of 14 first secretaries of republican parties are new. The sweep has reached far down into the ranks of the party and state hierarchy. In Uzbekistan, over half of the officials in posts on the nomenklatura lists supervised by the all-Union and Uzbek central committees have been replaced;[11] the situation is similar in Kirgizia and may soon be repeated in Turkmenistan.[12] The Moscow city committee has

[3]Archie Brown, "The Power of the General Secretary of the CPSU," in Rigby, Brown, and Reddaway, op cit., pp. 135–57.

[4]Just which groups gain power in such circumstances has been controversial. According to Harry Gelman, the Politburo continues to monopolize power (see Gelman, *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente*, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1984). Jerry Hough, on the other hand, suggests a greater, perhaps even decisive, role for the Central Committee (see Hough, "Soviet Succession: Issues and Personalities," *Problems of Communism* [Washington, DC], September-October 1982, and "Gorbachëv's Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* [New York], Fall 1985).

[5]The most systematic and original thinking along these lines is that of George Breslauer in *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics*, London, Allen and Unwin, 1982.

[6]T. H. Rigby, "Political Legitimacy, Weber, and Communist Mono-organizational Systems," in T. H. Rigby and Ferenc Feher, Eds., *Political Legitimation in Communist States*, London, Macmillan, 1982, pp. 1–26.

[7]This theme is developed further, together with an analysis of recent Western scholarship, in Thane Gustafson, "The Andropov Accession," in Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Ed., *Soviet Politics in the 1980s*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1985, pp. 3–22.

[8]From March 1985 to March 1986 there were eight additions to the Politburo (Yegor Ligachëv, Nikolay Ryzhkov, Lev Zaykov, Nikolay Slyun'kov, Sergey Sokolov, Yuriy Solov'yev, Nikolay Talyzin, and Boris Yel'tsin), two promotions (Viktor Chebrikov and Eduard Shevardnadze), and five departures (Viktor Grishin, Grigoriy Romanov, Nikolay Tikhonov, Ivan Kuznetsov, and Boris Ponomarëv). To compare, Khrushchev made two even vaster sweeps of the Politburo in the 1950's, first making 29 changes during a contraction from 1958 to 1961. (It should be noted, however, that it took him five years to accomplish the first sweep, and three more for the second.)

[9]This figure is based on personnel with ministerial rank and excludes transfers and promotions within the Council itself (thus, for example, Talyzin, Yuriy Batalin, and Ivan Silayev are not counted). The chairmen of republic councils of ministers, though technically ex officio members of the all-Union council, are not included in the calculation. Five agricultural ministries and one state committee were absorbed into the new State Agro-Industrial Committee in November 1985; of the six officials involved, only two (Yevgeniy Sizenko and Leonid Khitrun) are still members of the Council of Ministers today.

[10]This count excludes autonomous oblasts.

[11]See Inamdzhon Usmankhodzhayev's speech at the 27th CPSU Congress, as reported in *Pravda* (Moscow), Feb. 28, 1986. However, the purge in Uzbekistan began before Gorbachëv's accession.

[12]See ibid., Mar. 31, 1986. So far, Tadzhikistan has escaped major changes. In Kazakhstan, despite Dinmukhamed Kunayev's survival, only 31 percent of the 1981 republic central committee were reelected. See Bess Brown, "The Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan: Personnel Changes," *Radio Liberty Research* (Munich), RL 91/86, Feb. 21, 1986.

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been a prime target since Viktor Grishin's dismissal.[13] Throughout the country perhaps one-fifth of all officials of primary party organizations have been removed,[14] and the number of government officials transferred or dismissed may reach into the tens of thousands.[15]

But as one looks for possible political strategies behind these astonishing statistics, one finds ambiguities. The new leadership has taken substantial advantage of the advanced age of the Brezhnevian elite to ease out many of its oldest members, but far from all of them. Their replacements are younger, but not strikingly so. As a result, the so-called postwar generation has still not quite replaced its predecessors.

The average age of the new full and candidate Politburo members appointed under Gorbachëv is 61, and that of new members of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers is 57.[16] This brings the combined average down to 63 for the Politburo and to 62 for the Presidium, which is still high by past standards (55 was the average age of the Politburo elected in 1966). Similarly, the average age of new ministers and state committee chairmen appointed in the last year is 57, actually slightly older than their counterparts were when appointed in the first decade of the Brezhnev era.[17] Gorbachëv is still the youngest member of the Politburo,[18] being somewhat younger than his prime minister and most of his new ministers, and 11 years younger than his apparent second-in-command, Yegor Ligachëv.

It appears that the principal victims of the sweep have been older officials—at least this is the case at the upper levels, where we have the best age data on those dismissed. Among the RSFSR obkom first secretaries born in or before 1920, for example, 12 out of 15 lost their posts in the last year, a much higher proportion than for the group as a whole.[19] Similarly, of the members of the March 1985 Presidium of the Council of Ministers, 8 out of 11 are now gone. But it is striking how many very senior officials remain in their jobs. More than one-third of the full members of the new Central Committee, for example, have held their positions for 10 years or more. Some of the oldest members of the Council of Ministers are still there, such as the 81-year-old Minister for Nonferrous Metallurgy, Pëtr Lomako.

In other respects, too, the changes have been smaller in scope than one might have expected. The Central Committee is again the best example: 59 percent of the full members of the 1981 Central Committee still living were reelected, a sharp drop to be sure from the 89 and 87 percent reelected at the last two party congresses but about the same as in 1956 and more than in 1961 (see Figure 1). Two unexpected factors help explain the surprisingly high proportion of holdovers: (1) for the first time since the October Revolution, the number of full members on the Central Committee actually declined, from 319 to 307; and (2) five prominent former Brezhnev officials, though retired from their principal posts, retained their places on the Central Committee.[20] But for that, Gorbachëv would easily have had a majority of new full members.[21]

Certain groups have been relatively untouched so far. Few top KGB positions have changed hands. The military-industrial ministries have had no top-level dismissals,[22] although the long-time head of the Military-

[13]Of the Moscow city party officials elected in January 1984, only the following remained after the *gorkom* (city committee) conference of January 1986: 81 out of 175 *gorkom* members, 3 out of 14 bureau members, and none of 6 secretaries (a seventh, Lev Spiridonov, appointed after January 1984, has likewise departed). These numbers, however, include changes made before Gorbachëv's accession. We are indebted to Professor Timothy Colton for this information.

[14]*Pravda*, Feb. 12, 1986.

[15]Many job shifts are connected with management reorganizations; thus the Ministry of Instrument Making, Automation Equipment, and Control Systems (*Minpribor*) is reassigning 800 middle-level officials as a result of the elimination of the middle link in the management system. See Ye. Panov, "The Branch Makes The Choice," *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya* (Moscow), July 19, 1985, p. 2.

[16]The seven new members of the Presidium are Talyzin (born 1929), Vsevolod Murakhovskiy (1926), Ivan Silayev (1930), Ryzhkov (1929), Batalin (1927), Yuriy Maslyukov (1937), and Lev Voronin (1928).

[17]The average age of ministers/state committee chairmen appointed in the years 1966–75 was slightly over 55. (These figures are based on the age of new ministers and heads of state committees, but not Presidium members.) There is no one in the current Council of Ministers as young as E. K. Pervyshin was when appointed minister of the communications equipment industry (41) or Talyzin was on appointment as minister of communications (45). The youngest of the new group is V. A. Bykov, head of the newly-renamed Ministry for the Medical and Microbiological Industry, who was born in 1938. For background, see T. H. Rigby, "The Soviet Government Since Khrushchev," *Politics* (Canberra), May 1977, pp. 5–22.

[18]Boris Yel'tsin is a close second, having turned 55 in January 1986.

[19]The retirees' dates of appointment are evenly scattered from 1956 to 1978; six were appointed under Khrushchev (Timbora Mal'bakhov, Anatoliy Drygin, Ivan Yunak, Vasiliy Konotop, Valeriy Marisov, and Stepan Avramenko) and six under Brezhnev (Filipp Knyazhev, Viktor Grishin, Nikolay Priyezzhev, Fëdor Meshkov, Ivan Bespalov, and Pavel Leonov). In other words, they do not constitute a cluster of readily identifiable protégés or clients.

[20]The holdovers are Nikolay Baybakov, Boris Ponomarëv, Nikolay Tikhonov, Sergey Gorshkov, and Vladimir Tolubko. The last two are former high military commanders. Kuznetsov might be considered part of the list as well, but he may retain his functions as first deputy chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

[21]Among Central Committee candidate members, the turnover is much greater. Of the 170 candidates elected in 1986, only 49 had been among the candidate members elected in 1981. However, another 23 of the 1981 group were promoted to full membership in 1986, and 11 had been promoted between 1981 and 1986.

[22]The aged minister of the electronics industry, Aleksandr Shokin, retired in November 1985 because of bad health. Ivan Silayev, Minister of the Aviation Industry, was promoted to the head of the Council of Ministers' new Bureau for Machine-building (with the rank of deputy chairman of the Council).

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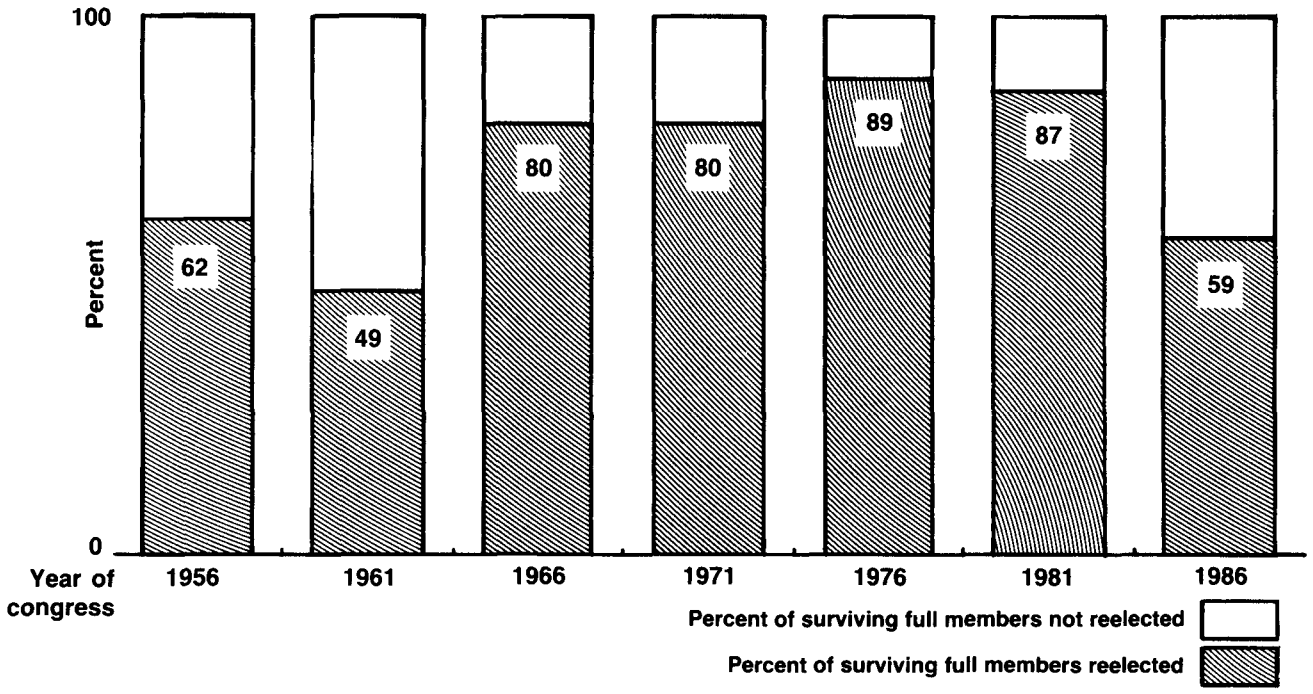
Figure 1: Rates of Reelection of Surviving Full Members of the CPSU Central Committee, 1956-86



Industrial Commission, Leonid Smirnov, has retired.[23] Changes among RSFSR obkom first secretaries 65 years old or younger have all been promotions, with only one exception;[24] and all 9 of the first secretaries appointed by Brezhnev since 1977 are still in place.[25] Last, some republics, particularly Ukraine, have undergone far fewer changes than the rest. As a general rule, turnover rates have been greater at higher levels than at lower, and closer to the center than to the periphery.[26]

What, then, is more important as a gauge of Gorbachëv's strategy and power—the unprecedented changes of the last year or the fact that they were not more far-reaching? Does the record suggest a powerful but judicious general secretary, or one who must share power and reckon with internal divisions and the possibility of spreading resistance and opposition? To arrive at some answers, we explore four test questions:

- Has Gorbachëv gained clear control over the levers of cadres selection and have the levers themselves regained their traditional functions?
- Has the center's control over cadres been successfully wrested from local leaders and has the General Secretary broken up local networks and established his own?
- Has the new leadership broken with the unwritten conventions on personnel that gradually became the norm under Brezhnev?
- Does Gorbachëv have only a brief window of opportunity to make personnel changes and, if so, how long will it remain open?

We shall examine each of these questions in turn.

[23]Smirnov was replaced by Maslyukov who, after a rapid rise through the Izhevsk machine-building factory and the Ministry of Defense Industry, and a tour in Gosplan, is now the youngest member of the Presidium.

[24]Among RSFSR obkom first secretaries born in 1921 or since, there have been 11 promotions but only 1 retirement, that of Vladimir Nikulin, born in 1928. Nikulin was one of the last Brezhnev appointees, having risen through the ranks of the Kalmyk hierarchy to reach the top of the obkom in 1978, a typical Brezhnevian career. The official reason given for his retirement was ill health. See *Pravda*, Dec. 21, 1985.

[25]They are Anatoliy Balandin (Orenburg oblast), Fëdor Kulikov (Penza oblast), Nikolay Mal'kov (Magadan oblast), Yevgeniy Murav'yev (Kuybyshev oblast), Vladimir Odintsov (Severo-Osetinskaya ASSR), Grigoriy Posibeyev (Mariyskaya ASSR), Yuriy Prokop'yev (Yakutskaya ASSR), Pëtr Tret'yakov (Sakhalin oblast), and Gumer Usmanov (Tatarskaya ASSR).

[26]In Armenia, 50 percent of the 1986 Central Committee are new; in Lithuania only 30 percent. See Elizabeth Teague, "Turnover in the Soviet Elite under Gorbachëv: Implications for Soviet Politics," paper presented at a May 8, 1986 meeting of the Washington, DC, Chapter of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies.

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Cadres Selection

The classic lever for personnel control from the earliest days of the Soviet regime has been the Organizational Party Work Department of the Central Committee. Under previous general secretaries, the head of that department was normally a carefully chosen protégé. However, throughout the Brezhnev era, the official in charge was Ivan Kapitonov, who did not owe his career to Brezhnev or to any other of the top leaders.[27] His very lack of visible political ties appeared to reflect the new leadership's determination to maintain collegial control over personnel policy and to prevent a reoccurrence of Khrushchev's abuse of the cadres lever.[28] The turnover of the top elite slowed steadily from what it had been under Khrushchev. The Central Committee, in particular, came to resemble a life peerage, as Figure 1 demonstrates.

The decline in turnover was especially noticeable among provincial party leaders in the Russian republic. From October 1965 to February 1971, 43 out of 72 first secretaries were replaced; from February 1971 to September 1976, only 19; and from September 1977 to November 1982, a mere 9. Few obkom first secretaryships changed hands twice under Brezhnev, and when they did, the change frequently involved a promotion.[29]

As cadres turnover declined, the Organizational Party Work Department took on trouble-shooting assignments in other areas. Boris Yel'tsin, Grishin's replacement as head of the Moscow city party committee, told the 27th Party Congress:

The Organizational Party Work Department is clearly overworked. Is there anything it is not involved in—railroad cars, fodder for livestock, and fuel? All that is important, of course. But the most important thing of all is cadres, and that is precisely the work that was neglected. The Party Organizational Work Department knew little about party cadres and monitored their work poorly . . . . How else can one explain the collapse that was allowed in several oblast, kray, and republic-level party organizations?[30]

Wielders of the "cadres weapon": at left, Georgiy Razumovskiy, new CPSU Central Committee secretary for cadres; at right, Yegor Ligachëv, Razumovskiy's predecessor and now presumably second-in-command of the CPSU Politburo after Mikhail Gorbachëv.

–TASS from SOVFOTO.

These words imply that Andropov and Gorbachëv faced a double task, that of reasserting control over the Organizational Party Work Department and of returning it to its traditional duties. In the spring of 1983, Andropov replaced Kapitonov with a new chief of cadres, Yegor Ligachëv. Like Kapitonov, Ligachëv did not owe his career to the General Secretary or any of the new leaders,[31] but it was clear from the first that he was chosen for the purpose of overseeing an active personnel policy. In April 1985, Ligachëv was promoted to full member of the Politburo and replaced in the Organizational Party Work Department by Georgiy Razumovskiy, formerly kraykom first secretary in Krasnodar and an individual whose career suggests a close

[27]Kapitonov rose through the ranks of the Moscow party apparatus, heading the city committee from 1952 to 1954 and the oblast committee from 1954 to 1959. He then headed the Ivanovo oblast committee from 1959 to 1964. Kapitonov was appointed CC secretary with responsibility for party cadres in 1965 and retained that position until Andropov became general secretary.

[28]For most of the Brezhnev period Kapitonov's formal superior for cadres policy was Andrey Kirilenko, who appeared to be Brezhnev's man. However, Kapitonov may have been informally accountable to other members of the Politburo as well, including Mikhail Suslov. For reviews of the apparent roles of Kapitonov and Kirilenko in cadres policy, see Harry Gelman, *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente*, pp. 55, 75–76, *and 254; and T. H. Rigby, "The Soviet Regional Leadership: the Brezhnev* Generation," *Slavic Review* (Columbus, OH), March 1978, p. 9.

[29]Rigby, "The Soviet Regional Leadership," loc. cit., pp. 11–12.

[30]For the text of Yel'tsin's speech, see *Pravda*, Feb. 27, 1986.

[31]Ligachëv had spent the previous 18 years as first secretary of the Tomsk oblast committee. T. H. Rigby speculates that Ligachëv may have been sponsored originally by Suslov (Rigby, "The Soviet Regional Leadership," loc. cit., p. 11). Jerry Hough, on the other hand, points out a connection with Kirilenko, under whom Ligachëv served in the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee in the early 1960's (Hough, "Andropov's First Year," *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1983, p. 59). Neither of these ties, however, appears especially strong.

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association with Gorbachëv.[32]

The implications of Ligachëv's appointment and subsequent promotion for Gorbachëv's own control over the levers of personnel are not yet clear. Gorbachëv is thought to have been in charge of party cadres under both Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko; Ligachëv, in other words, initially reported to him. With Razumovskiy's appointment and Ligachëv's elevation to the Politburo, Ligachëv may continue to oversee cadres policy, but from a position of greater power. At the 27th Party Congress Ligachëv spoke with authority about cadres—at greater length in fact than Gorbachëv himself. And Ligachëv's use of the word "collegial" to describe the work of the Politburo and the Secretariat (he was the only speaker at the Congress to do so) hardly suggested someone who regards himself as the General Secretary's man. In sum, the machinery for personnel control has been reactivated, but Gorbachëv may share control over it with senior colleagues.

Central Control

Under Brezhnev the power of local patronage went by default to regional and local leaders, who used it to build followings of their own. The cadres weapon, in other words, did not disappear; it was simply being wielded at a lower level.[33] Several speakers at the 27th Party Congress commented on the consequences. Boris Yel'tsin observed that in the Brezhnev years certain people and positions belonged to "zones beyond criticism, particularly in Central Asia." Ligachëv was even blunter:

The necessary trust in cadres gave way to a blind trustfulness, and basically, to an absence of monitoring. Words about a "caring attitude" toward cadres, though correct in themselves, frequently served to cover up a policy of benign neglect and all-forgiving indulgence. The line calling for "stability of cadres" was systematically turned into a policy of immobility.[34]

Since Brezhnev's death, and especially under Gorbachëv, the center has sharply reasserted its powers and prerogatives in local cadres policy. The most spectacular case is Uzbekistan, where many local officials have been replaced by outsiders sent from the Central Committee in Moscow and from elsewhere, while a new generation of Uzbek party officials has been sent to higher party schools around the RSFSR.[35]

To strengthen the power of the center, the new leadership has dusted off an old device and put it to an intriguing new use. Over half of the new obkom first secretaries and republican first secretaries appointed under Gorbachëv were previously rotated to the Central Committee in Moscow for a brief tour of duty, most often with the rank of "inspector."[36] This maneuver evidently began under Andropov, though the officials involved only began taking up their obkom positions under Gorbachëv. The post of "inspector" is associated in party history with a postwar purge of provincial leaderships, and that is presumably the association that its revival is meant to convey today,[37] though the designation of inspector occurred from time to time under both Khrushchev and Brezhnev. This technique must help the General Secretary in at least three ways: it gives him a close look at candidates for promotion; it gives him an effective instrument for purging the local apparatus; and once the former inspector takes his

[32]Razumovskiy's career parallels Gorbachëv's in two respects: he rose as primarily an agricultural official, and he served for many years in Krasnodar Kray, which borders on Stavropol'. In particular, he chaired the Krasnodar Kray government's Executive Committee from 1973 to 1981, then headed the Agro-Industrial Complex Department of the USSR Council of Ministers from 1981 to 1983, when he was appointed first secretary of the Krasnodar Kray party committee. His earlier service in the Central Committee's Agricultural Department (1971–73) suggests possible ties to Gorbachëv's predecessor and early sponsor, Fëdor Kulakov.

[33]One symptom of this is that while the turnover rate of republic party leaders and RSFSR obkom first secretaries slowed sharply, the rate of movement below them remained high. See Jerry Hough, *Soviet Leadership in Transition* Washington, DC, The Brookings Institution, 1980, pp. 70–75; idem, "Changes in Soviet Elite Composition," in Seweryn Bialer and Thane Gustafson, Eds., *Russia at the Crossroads: The 26th Congress of the CPSU*, London, Allen and Unwin, 1982, pp. 57–60.

[34]For Ligachëv's speech, see *Pravda*, Feb. 28, 1986.

[35]See Usmankhodzhayev's speech, ibid. Usmankhodzhayev hinted that there had been a first round of "restoration of order," presumably following Sharaf Rashidov's death at the end of October 1983, but that more recently the Uzbek Party "felt with new force the assistance of the CPSU Central Committee." This referred to a second round of purges that began after the Uzbek Central Committee plenum in June 1984, i.e., under Konstantin Chernenko.

[36]Of the 24 new RSFSR obkom and kraykom first secretaries appointed since March 11, 1985, 16 had been rotated to the Central Committee, 12 of them as inspectors; of the 23 non-Russian obkom secretaries, 6 had done a Central Committee tour, but in some cases only at a republic-level central committee. Of the four new republican first secretaries, Saparmurad Niyazov (Turkmenistan) and Absamat Masaliyev (Kirgizia) had recently done tours at the Central Committee, as had Masaliyev's second secretary. See Bess Brown, "New Party First Secretary in Turkmenistan," *Radio Liberty Research*, RL 11/86, Dec. 23, 1985; and idem, "New Kirgiz First Secretary Cleans House," ibid., RL 15/86, Dec. 31, 1986.

[37]The position of inspector was first created in 1946. Stalin appointed N. S. Patolichev to head a new Central Committee office, an Administration for Checking Party Organs. Stalin and Patolichev called the Administration's officials "inspectors" and gave them wide powers. The purpose of the new body was to shake up the local party organs, which Stalin believed had grown lax during the war years. This episode is described in Werner Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics*, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1982, pp. 46–47, 54–55; and in Patolichev's memoirs, *Ispytaniye na zrelost'* (A Test of Maturity), Moscow, Politizdat, 1977.

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post as first secretary he presumably views himself (and is viewed by others) as "Moscow's man." Thus, rotation through the Central Committee could offset the factors that weakened the loyalty of regional officials under Brezhnev.[38]

Despite these measures, pockets of local patronage remain. The clearest case is the Ukrainian republic, whose party organization was extensively purged in the early 1970's after the removal of its previous leader Petro Shelest. The control of his successor, Volodymr Shcherbytskyi, has not yet been challenged, perhaps because he sided early with Andropov and Gorbachëv.[39] In Kazakhstan, by contrast, over 500 leading officials of the republican party machine have been purged without the removal of Dinmukhamed Kunayev himself, although he clearly opposed the changes.[40]

Has Gorbachëv begun to establish his own network? Brezhnev was as vigorous as any of his predecessors in one aspect of cadres policy: as he grew older, he advanced more and more former associates from his days in Moldavia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. But unlike Khrushchev, who installed his protégés at all levels, Brezhnev concentrated on the top. Gorbachëv has promoted several of his past associates from Stavropol', but so far mostly at the middle level. The only major exception is the chairman of the new State Agro-Industrial Commission, Vsevolod Murakhovskiy, who had succeeded Gorbachëv as kraykom first secretary in Stavropol'.[41]

What is striking about those recently promoted is the diversity of their backgrounds. This may reflect a deliberate strategy on the part of the General Secretary to widen the base of his support. The earliest cluster of high-level promotions under Gorbachëv consisted of officials first placed at the threshold by Andropov. Several of these had past connections with Andrey Kirilenko or Kirilenko's former party base in Sverdlovsk.[42] Since that first wave of promotions, other clusters have emerged as well. After the removal of Grigoriy Romanov,[43] several Leningraders appeared on the scene—notably Boris Aristov (Minister of Foreign Trade), Yuriy Solov'yev (the new Leningrad city party chief), Vasiliy Zakharov (new second secretary of the Moscow city party committee), and Lev Zaykov (the newest full member of the Politburo).[44] A third cluster is a group of officials from the southern regions of the country near Stavropol'. Beyond Murakhovskiy and Razumovskiy, the most prominent examples are

[38]T. H. Rigby's "Soviet Regional Leadership" (loc. cit., p. 23) contains some thought-provoking observations on the factors affecting the extent to which patronage relationships produce loyalty to the patron. In contrast to Khrushchev, who frequently appointed former subordinates to first obkom secretaryships, Brezhnev limited this practice to his most senior appointments. Consequently, his appointments at the obkom level produced only the weakest form of patronage-loyalty relationship, one based on the act of appointment itself.

[39]For valuable background on Ukrainian cadres policy, which demonstrates that the practice of "trust in cadres" was not followed until after Shcherbytskyi's control was solidly established, see Mark R. Beissinger, "The Ukrainian Party Apparatus Compared," (manuscript to be published in 1987). Shcherbytskyi may have begun to distance himself from Brezhnev as early as 1980. In an interview in *Pravda*, of Dec. 28, 1980, Shcherbytskyi spoke of an unnamed leader who takes an "uneven attitude toward subordinates," keeping some "close at hand," while "others he will seem to hold at a far distance." In words that could be interpreted as a swipe at Chernenko, Shcherbytskyi warned that if the leader did not give all his subordinates access to him to raise important questions, he would end up being surrounded by a circle of obsequious people "who very skillfully find his weak points and use them for their own advantage." As a result, the leader's opinion of subordinates who are far away may become poisoned; he will label them "upstarts" and "quarrelsome," while in reality they are the "real enthusiasts," the ones who are "needed most of all."

[40]On Feb. 9, 1986, *Pravda* commented, "Numerous leading officials have been removed recently from the positions they occupied, but only at the insistence of the center. In other words, the Bureau and the Secretariat of the Kazakh Party, even though they knew about those officials' unworthy behavior and their failures on the job, did not take the necessary decisions."

[41]Another official with past ties to Gorbachëv is V. I. Kalashnikov, now first secretary of the Volgograd obkom, who rose through the ranks of Stavropol' to become kraykom secretary from 1975 to 1982. V. Volodin, obkom first secretary of Rostov, may be the same man who was agricultural secretary of Stavropol' obkom until 1983. In addition, several senior CC officials have ties with Gorbachëv: Veniamin Afonin, head of the Chemical Industry Department, served in Stavropol; Anatoliy Luk'yanov of the General Department was at Moscow State University with Gorbachëv, as were Valentin Chikin (the new editor of *Sovetskaya Rossiya*), Ivan Frolov (the new editor of *Kommunist*), and Lev Spiridonov (new first deputy editor of *Pravda*).

[42]The group of currently prominent people who served under Kirilenko in Sverdlovsk (1955–62) is small but select. It includes Yakov Ryabov (now deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers), Gennadiy Kolbin (appointed first obkom secretary in Ul'yanovsk under Andropov), and Lev Voronin (chairman of Gossnab and deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers). In some cases the tie is doubtful: Nikolay Kruchina (now head of the Central Committee's Administrative Organs Department) was a minor Komsomol official in Sverdlovsk oblast in Kirilenko's time; more significant, he was deputy head of the CC agriculture department under Gorbachëv in the late 1970's. Nikolai Ryzhkov was a junior official in Uralmashzavod in Sverdlovsk, while Boris Yel'tsin was rising in the field of mining construction; neither one was prominent enough at the time to be considered a Kirilenko protégé. Not all Sverdlovsk graduates have done well: Viktor Krotov, for example, became minister of Minenergomash under Brezhnev but was dismissed under Andropov. Other Kirilenko associations go back to his days in Dnipropetrovsk: Viktor Chebrikov's and Shcherbytskyi's initial ties were to Kirilenko rather than to Brezhnev.

[43]Gorbachëv's speech to the Leningrad party aktiv in May 1985 was full of praise for Leningrad as a pioneer in technological and industrial innovation—while Romanov, the man who had run Leningrad during this period, was nowhere to be seen. Gorbachëv's co-optation of Romanov's base in Leningrad came so quickly and was so overt that one wonders how long it had been in preparation. Could Romanov have been brought to Moscow in the spring of 1983 partly to get him away from Leningrad?

[44]Two other recent appointees with backgrounds in the Leningrad party apparatus include Anatoliy Dumachev (formerly second secretary of the Leningrad obkom under Romanov and subsequently first secretary of the Leningrad gorkom, now chairman of the State Committee for Vocational and Technical Education) and Valeriy Bykov (briefly head of a gorkom in Leningrad oblast', now minister of the Medical and Microbiological Industry). Dumachev's appointment can hardly be considered a promotion—unless Gorbachëv attaches truly exceptional importance to technical education.

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Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, formerly head of Georgia's party, and Aleksandr Vlasov, the new minister of internal affairs.[45]

The Western press has made much of the highly visible group of appointments from the Urals and Siberia, but there is no reason to believe that it forms any sort of united group. A Yuriy Batalin or Boris Shcherbina, who rose through the energy industry, will hold different views from an Abel Aganbegyan, who advocates balanced Siberian development; Yel'tsin appears to differ from both Nikolay Ryzhkov and Ligachëv on issues such as publicity and party privilege; and Yakov Ryabov and Lev Voronin, despite a common background in Urals defense industries, now have different responsibilities and presumably different outlooks. Holdovers such as Viktor Dolgikh and Guriy Marchuk, though Siberian, appear to stand outside the new ruling group; and Mikhail Nenashev, though he rose through Magnitogorsk, does not necessarily have any "Siberian" views at all. In short, there is no single "eastern" faction.

Promotion Patterns

Under Brezhnev, personnel selection for certain important positions came to follow regular patterns. In the more technical ministries, new ministers were usually career specialists who rose through the ranks of their ministries to the position of first deputy.[46] Obkom first secretaries increasingly rose through their own oblasts, following careers that took them through a succession of local party and government posts.[47] Gorbachëv himself had the classic "Brezhnevian" career: 23 years rising through the ranks in the Stavropol' party organization, with no experience elsewhere (apart from his student days at Moscow State University) until his promotion to Moscow.

Under Gorbachëv, the predictable patterns of the Brezhnev era have weakened but have not disappeared entirely. Among the 29 "rank-and-file" ministers and heads of state committees appointed under him (i.e., other than those who are simultaneously members of the Presidium), 10 were previously first deputies or near equivalents,[48] and another 5 rose through closely related institutions. The career technical expert is clearly still the dominant type (19 out of 29).[49] The "party generalist," once dominant in the government, is limited to a handful of positions, most of them highly political.[50]

A similar pattern exists within the Presidium and even the new Politburo, giving a strongly technocratic cast to the new leadership. Only two of the new Politburo members, Ligachëv and Yel'tsin, could be considered to have had purely "party" careers;[51] three others have had "mixed" careers alternating between party and government; while the remaining five are co-opted government officials.[52] Such co-optation or choice of persons with mixed careers was not unknown in the Politburo under Brezhnev, but the representation of the pure party official has noticeably weakened since his death.[53]

The pattern of movement in another important group, the RSFSR obkom first secretaries, also shows a decline but not a disappearance of the Brezhnevian pattern. Only half of the 24 new appointees (to judge from the limited information currently available about them) made their careers in the region they now head (see Table 1). Under Brezhnev, the share of "natives"

[45]In addition, at least two deputy chairmen of the new State Agro-Industrial Committee are southerners, notably deputy chairman A. A. Nikonov (head of the Stavropol' Agricultural Institute during Gorbachëv's tenure there) and G. A. Romanenko (newly appointed director of the Agricultural Institute of nearby Krasnodar). The authors are grateful to Werner Hahn for this information.

[46]T. H. Rigby documented the importance of the minister-technocrat under Brezhnev, particularly in the more technical ministries, in "The Soviet Government since Khrushchev," loc. cit.

[47]Rigby, "Soviet Regional Leaders," loc. cit. Again, the principal exception to this, particularly in the first decade of the Brezhnev era, was Ukraine.

[48]Gennadiy Voronovskiy, Yuriy Brezhnev, Veniamin Korolev, Serafim Kolpakov, Vladislav Kolesnikov, Nikolay Lemayev, Apollon Systsov, and Mikhail Shchadov were all first deputy heads of their agencies. Sergey Voyenushkin and Arkadiy Shchepetil'nikov were republic-level ministers who were promoted to head the counterpart central ministry.

[49]Within this group, however, are some novel and even unorthodox appointments. Two new ministers in the machine-building sector (Vladimir Luk'yanenko and Yevgeniy Varnachev) were appointed from major plants in the provinces. Four others were "co-opted specialists," i.e., officials who oversaw major technical operations from a party post (Vladimir Klyuyev, Valerniy Bykov, Konstantin Katushev, and Boris Gostev). Even some of the former first deputies have had careers that mark them as "new" men; for example, the new minister of the electronics industry, Vladislav Kolesnikov, was one of the first semiconductor specialists in Soviet industry, beginning in the 1950's.

[50]The "party generalist" is defined as an official who has spent most of his career in line party administration. There are 5 among the new ministers/chairmen: Shevardnadze (foreign affairs), Aristov (foreign trade), Vlasov (internal affairs), Nenashev (publishing), and Dumachev (vocational and technical education).

[51]The definition has to be stretched a bit in the case of Yel'tsin, who was in the construction industry until the age of 37.

[52]Shevardnadze, Chebrikov, and Solov'yev have held both major government and party positions, although Solov'yev's first major party position did not come until he was 38. Zaykov, Ryzhkov, Sokolov, Slyun'kov, and Talyzin had never held top party positions, except for Zaykov, who headed the Leningrad obkom after Romanov moved to Moscow in 1983. Of the new members of the Presidium, only Murakhovskiy has held major party posts.

[53]Nikolay Tikhonov, Andrey Gromyko, and even Kunayev were all co-opted state officials, and of the candidate members in November 1982 only Ponomarëv and Solomentsev could be termed "pure" apparatus men—and even the latter had had extensive factory experience. Still, in the November 1982 Politburo, half of the voting members had "pure" party careers.

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Table 1: Last Positions of New RSFSR Obkom First Secretaries

(excluding Central Committee assignments)

From same oblast/kray/ASSR	
Obkom second secretary	Nikolay Yermakov, Viktor Zorkal'tsev, Valentin Kuptsov
Other secretary in obkom	Ivan Polozkov, Yegor Stroyev, Ivan Boldyrev, Yuriy Petrov
Gorkom first secretary	*Leonid Sharin*
First secretary of autonomous oblast	Yevgeniy Yeliseyev
Chairman oblast executive committee	Boris Volodin,[a] Yevgeniy Podol'skiy
First dep. chairman oblast executive committee	Vladimir Toropov
From a different oblast/kray/ASSR	
Obkom first secretary	Boris Yel'tsin, Aleksandr Khomyakov
Obkom second secretary	Pëtr Grishchenko, Mikhail Knyazyuk, Yuriy Liventsov
Other secretary in obkom	Vadim Bakatin, Aleksandr Plekhanov
Chairman oblast executive committee	Vladimir Zakharov[b]
From Moscow central government	
USSR minister	Valentin Mesyats, Yuriy Solov'yev
USSR deputy minister	Nikolay Tatarchuk
Previous position unknown	
	Pavel Smol'skiy

[a]Volodin previously served in Stavropol'.
[b]The post listed was in Sakhalin in the early 1980's; Zakharov's last previous position is unknown.

SOURCE NOTE: The authors are grateful to Werner Hahn and Elizabeth Teague for their help in compiling this information.

in such appointments was close to 70 percent; Gorbachëv's approach, which began under Andropov,[54] marks a return to the pre-1965 pattern.[55]

In the non-Russian republics, the proportion of "outsider" appointees is even higher, most notably in Uzbekistan. This may be because the new leaders in Moscow do not regard a brief tour at the CPSU Central Committee to be enough to overcome local ties. For the longer term, a new generation of Uzbek leaders is being trained at higher party schools around the country.[56]

One might have thought that 18 years of Brezhnevian personnel policy would produce a generation of party leaders with little experience of regions outside their own, provincial in every sense of the word, and ill-suited for national leadership—especially in contrast to the Moscow-based government technocracy. But Gorbachëv's first year has witnessed a mass migration of "provincials" to leading positions in Moscow. Not only have 11 obkom first secretaries been promoted to major positions, but many of the new members of the USSR Council of Ministers have come from the provinces, whether directly or indirectly.

This trend evidences more than a deliberate political strategy on the part of Andropov and Gorbachëv; it also reflects the fact that under Brezhnev the country's economy and technological structure became more diversified. The revival of Leningrad, the growth of high-technology industries in the Urals, the increase in the economic importance of Siberia, and the agricultural modernization of the south have created new managerial talent that is evidently anything but backward. In contrast, one notes the relative decline of the Moscow party apparatus, once a disproportionately significant source of leading cadres for the national government and the entire country. The virtual exclusion of Moscow party cadres from the new leadership, though in the near term a consequence of Viktor Grishin's disfavor, is the culmination of trends that have been under way for some time.[57]

[54]Eight of 16 RSFSR first secretaries appointed under Andropov had previously held positions in the same oblast.
[55]Rigby, "Soviet Regional Leaders," *loc. cit.*
[56]Usmankhodzhayev's speech, *Pravda*, Feb. 28, 1986.
[57]The decline of the Moscow party apparatus is examined as part of a major study currently being prepared by Timothy Colton on Moscow and its government.

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The Presidium of the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union responds to the applause of delegates at the opening session on February 25, 1986. In the front row, from left to right, are "second secretary," Yegor Ligachëv, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachëv, and Soviet President Andrey Gromyko; in the second row, left to right, Boris Yel'tsin, Vladimir Dolgikh, Vasiliy Kuznetsov, Marshal Sergey Sokolov, and Nikolay Talyzin; in the third row, left to right, Vsevolod Murakhovskiy, Aleksey Antonov, Yuriy Batalin, Lev Voronin, and Guriy Marchuk.

–TASS from SOVFOTO.

Continued Turnover?

Will the apparent revival of the cadres weapon turn out to be a passing thing, a "window of opportunity" that is already closing? The logic of this idea is that Gorbachëv enjoyed uniquely favorable circumstances at his accession: a conveniently superannuated, corrupt, and incompetent senior leadership; an absence of serious rivals at the top; the good fortune of coming into office one year before a party congress; and a widely shared mood for change at all levels of the system. But these advantages are already fading and will not recur.

Turnover cannot continue at the pace of Gorbachëv's first year, but the changes just reviewed suggest that the new leaders have already created the means for a lastingly vigorous cadres policy. The Organizational Party Work Department is back to its task of supervising cadres and is busy breaking up local patronage networks. New cadres are being drawn both from the center and from local elites (sanitized by rotation through Moscow). According to Ligachëv, this policy will continue:

We will draw from the ranks of local comrades and from those of officials transferred from the center and from other regions of the country. In that way experience is transmitted faster and the overall level of cadres rises more quickly.[58]

The center has also served notice that, once appointed, the new local party leaders will not be allowed to build patronage networks of their own. Several speakers at the 27th Party Congress recommended that local officials be made to give regular accounts of themselves at Central Committee headquarters; presumably such accounts will focus especially on matters of personnel.

The atrophy of the cadres weapon under Brezhnev was a direct consequence of its hypertrophy under Khrushchev. The new leaders wish to avoid the ex-

[58]Ligachëv's speech, *Pravda*, Feb. 28, 1986.

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tremes of constant pressure and excessive lenience. To quote Ligachëv again: "In the past, as you know, comrades, in these matters we had both hard frosts and thaws, but what we need is simply stable good weather."[59]

The policy of "stable good weather" will increase not only the power of the center but probably also that of the general secretary himself. The changes since Brezhnev's death have brought in a diverse group without a single cluster large enough or like-minded enough to dominate. The strongly technocratic cast of the new appointees, whatever it may portend for Gorbachëv's authority-building strategy, may give him—a professional politician—a lasting edge in maneuver. Finally, since most of the new appointees are older than Gorbachëv himself, this is likely to extend his options, since no new "Generation of 1938" appears to be taking shape in the party leadership.

In sum, though one cannot be sure whether Gorbachëv has achieved sole control of the cadres weapon today, the revived cadres machinery and the reinvigorated policy on cadres matters seem likely to increase his power steadily as time goes by. But his power depends at least as much on what he tries to use it for and whether he is able to build and maintain a consensus in the elite. This brings us to the question of authority.

II. BUILDING AUTHORITY

Authority is "the power of legitimacy," the special power of a leader whom others obey because they view his commands as legitimate. The authority of both Khrushchev and Brezhnev eroded badly by the end of their reigns, and the succession of ailing men in the first half of the 1980's appeared to portend a permanent weakening of authority, not only of the general secretary's office but of the political system as a whole. The new Moscow gorkom first secretary, Boris Yel'tsin, could hardly have put it more bluntly:

We must not be mesmerized by the steady political stability of the country. How many times can one allow the same mistakes and not take into account the lessons of history?[60]

Devising an effective strategy for building authority, though perhaps more urgent now than ever before, has been the constant preoccupation of general secretaries. The basic problem is that strategies acceptable to the political elite increasingly fail to yield policy results. George Breslauer summed up the resulting situation in four propositions: (1) there is a constant tension in the Soviet political system between centralized, mobilizational approaches and reformist ones based on local initiative, economic methods, and broader political participation; (2) the consistent winners in Soviet politics are programs that rely on party activism, political intervention, and pressure, while reformist programs are restricted and obstructed; (3) to make the mobilizational approach work, general secretaries are obliged to set ambitious goals and targets that strain resources and foster unbalanced planning; (4) but the increasing failure of this approach continually generates more pressure for change and reform.[61] Neither Khrushchev nor Brezhnev were able to break this cycle of futility. At bottom it is due to a growing contradiction between the elite's need for security and faith in control and the system's requirements for effectiveness and efficiency. Will Gorbachëv be trapped in the same dilemmas as his predecessors, or has he devised an authority-building strategy that stands a better chance of success? This would involve breaking with the centralizing mobilization approach of the past and protecting the reformist elements of his program.

A striking initial feature of Gorbachëv's approach to authority-building is its pragmatism. Except for his speech at the 27th Party Congress, Gorbachëv has used a minimum of doctrinal quotations, more frequently invoking instead popular aspirations and support as the ultimate source of his authority. Gorbachëv's program has two main goals: to revitalize the economy and to restore order in society. To evaluate this strategy's chances for success, we must address three questions: (1) Are both parts of the strategy sound, that is, internally consistent and feasible? (2) Do both have support and at what levels? (3) Do they reinforce one another or conflict?

Contradictions in Economic Strategy

Gorbachëv's economic strategy consists of two phases.[62] The first aims to accelerate immediately the

[59]Ibid.

[60]Yel'tsin's speech to the 27th Party Congress in ibid., Feb. 27, 1986. This theme could be found in Andropov's writings, too. See his article on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Karl Marx's death, "The Teaching of Karl Marx and Certain Questions of the Building of Socialism in the USSR," *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 3, 1983, pp. 9ff.

[61]Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders*, pp. 278–84.

[62]For an excellent overall analysis of Gorbachëv's economic program, see Ed A. Hewett, "Gorbachëv's Economic Strategy: a Preliminary Assessment" (and accompanying commentary by Philip Hanson), *Soviet Economy* (Washington, DC), March 1986, pp. 285–312.

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growth rate of national income. The second, longer-term part of Gorbachëv's strategy is to promote a radical restructuring of the country's entire industrial stock, particularly the machinery sector, so as to put the Soviet Union on the "rails of intensification" toward the "world level" of productivity. There is nothing in this program that Gorbachëv's predecessors would have disagreed with. What makes his strategy potentially different is that he proposes to achieve it by reallocating resources and by reforming the "economic mechanism."

Much of this program is only now being spelled out in detail, but it is already clear that it contains two serious internal sources of tension. These will force choices—indeed, they are already doing so. First, the near-term goal of accelerating growth competes with the long-term one of promoting innovation and reconstruction. In effect, the new leadership is sending two signals to ministries and managers that are contradictory: to meet production targets and simultaneously to innovate. On past form, they will choose to meet targets.

Second, the technological modernization program competes directly, at least in the near term, with consumer welfare. It is not always realized in the West to what extent Brezhnev had shifted priorities away from basic industrial investment, particularly manufacturing, and toward consumption and consumer-related investment.[63] Gorbachëv's economic program proposes to reverse this trend. The new five-year plan provides for a sharp increase in the investment share of machine-building, chemistry, metallurgy, and electronics; and indeed, the early signs are that as the five-year plan gets translated into annual ones these increases will even exceed the initial targets. Investment in energy and agriculture will continue to grow strongly. In contrast, investment in the consumer sector and in "non-productive" spheres is being held back.[64] It is hard to see from the numbers announced so far how Gorbachëv proposes to double the rate of growth of nonfood consumer goods and services.[65]

The danger, in sum, is that Gorbachëv's economic strategy as it is currently designed will force Soviet managers into a frantic race to increase gross output in key industrial branches, to resist or fake innovation and productivity increases, and to withdraw resources from consumer-related sectors. That will hardly build Gorbachëv's popularity or, more importantly, the motivation of workers.

Why then does Gorbachëv insist on immediate increases in growth? First, as a practical political matter, increased growth rates are the most visible indicator of change. Gorbachëv's reputation as a problem-solver, whatever else he may do, rises or falls on that single figure. Second, only through a faster generation of wealth can the leadership hope to address simultaneously all three of the country's most pressing needs: defense, consumption, and industrial modernization.

But how is this burst of growth to be realized? The scientific-technological revolution will require a decade or more to begin paying off; and even the most successful fuel-switching or loss-reducing reallocations in energy and agriculture will take five years to show real results. Gorbachëv's answer is the "human factor." He is counting on a restoration of discipline and order, together with the beginnings of an improvement in the economic mechanism, to generate in the near term the extra productivity that will accelerate growth.

If the desired burst of productivity does not occur and real growth (as opposed to inflation) does not accelerate, then the new leadership will face some serious decisions that could strain its unity. Gorbachëv's technocratic allies might not object to putting consumer welfare on temporary hold. Prime Minister Ryzhkov, commenting on the growing share of productive investment planned for the 12th Five-Year Plan, justified it as an "essential maneuver":

Naturally, this will entail a certain change in shares in the allocation of national income: the share of accumulation will rise. But subsequently the share of accumulation is projected to stabilize or even to decline slightly.[66]

[63]From the 8th Five-Year Plan (1966–70) through the first four years of the 11th (1981–84), the share of accumulation in national income declined from 28 to 25.5 percent. (B. Plyshevskiy, "Accumulation and Intensification," *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta* (Moscow), No. 3, 1986, p. 2. "Accumulation" in Soviet parlance is net capital expenditures (i.e., gross capital investment less depreciation) plus net increases in inventory and reserves. What remains is "consumption," which includes some military spending. Within the accumulation envelope, agriculture and inventory grew rapidly, leaving relatively smaller shares for industrial investment. (Inventory, in particular, grew from 116 billion rubles in 1980 to 148 billion in 1985. See L. Abalkin "The Dialectics of Interaction," *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya*, Mar. 20, 1986.) Within that sub-envelope, investment in extractive industries, especially energy, squeezed the manufacturing sector further.

[64]According to preliminary calculations by Ed Hewett, a 25 percent increase in "productive investment" implies only a 7 percent increase in "non-productive" investment over the 12th Five-Year Plan.

[65]In his recent speech to the workers of the Volga Automotive Plant in Tol'yatti, Gorbachëv stated that a "reallocation of resources in favor of the social program has taken place" (*Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta*, No. 16, 1986, p. 4). This is somewhat mystifying in light of the numbers given at the 27th Party Congress, which place such strong emphasis on industrial modernization that they would appear to exclude such a reallocation. (For background, see the recent joint report of the CIA and DIA to the Joint Economic Committee of the US Congress, "The Soviet Economy under a New Leader," Washington, DC, US Government Printing Office, Mar. 19, 1986.)

[66]See Nikolay Ryzhkov, "On the Basic Directions of the Economic and Social Development of the USSR in 1986–1990 and in the Period to the Year 2000—Report of the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers N. I. Ryzhkov," *Pravda*, Mar. 4, 1986.

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Gorbachëv's own words do not contain any such notion of postponement; on the contrary, he speaks of consumer welfare as an essential source of near-term popular support: "The social programs are pressing; the Soviet people must feel in a short time the results . . . ."[67] Or, as he said last year in Leningrad:

If we don't get 4 percent—and we need even more than that—then the question arises: what to do? Cut back growth rates of living standards? Curtail the program to raise the material welfare of the people? We can't go in that direction.[68]

But scarce rubles are scarce rubles. Gorbachëv is leaning very heavily indeed on changes in the behavior of managers and workers to provide for increases in living standards over the next five years. On past form, that will not work. Success depends on how far Gorbachëv is willing to go to try to change behavior, whether through discipline or through reform, and how persistent he will be.

Restoring Order and Discipline

Gorbachëv's second authority-building strategy is to restore order and discipline and strengthen social justice. Gorbachëv believes this to be a popular issue, but it is also a potentially explosive one if not addressed. As he said in one of his first speeches as general secretary:

Obviously, we are all sensitive to the fact that recently the issues of moral order and social justice are being raised at all levels of our society more and more sharply and insistently. We at the Central Committee are aware of this heightened sensitivity. . . . Our people are becoming more intolerant of abuses, breaches of the law, bureaucratism, parasitism, drunkenness, prodigality, waste, and other negative phenomena.[69]

Gorbachëv's program has two distinct parts. First, basic order and discipline must be reestablished; workers must come to work sober; crime must be curbed. The core of this part of the program is the anti-alcohol campaign. Second, the new leadership pledges to curb corruption and abuses of official privilege; the key phrase here is the elimination of "unearned income." Leaving aside the obvious difficulties in the first part of the program, we focus here on several sources of tension in the second.

Unearned income is a grab-bag of illegal gains: speculation, theft and resale of state property, bribery, underground enterprise, moonlighting with state equipment, illegal rents, etc. But in Gorbachëv's usage "unearned income" includes all incomes that are not directly gotten through legal labor. Thus idlers receive unearned income, but so do those who collect bonuses or guaranteed salaries incommensurate to their actual contribution to labor. Even "levelling" (i.e., the widespread practice of evening out bonuses and benefits regardless of performance) is in the same class with corruption since it weakens morale and motivation.[70]

This program may be popular in principle, but in practice it is going to run into problems. Gorbachëv understands as well as anyone that the "second" economy is a response to the ills of the "first." His answer is that one must make illegal paths less necessary by giving freer rein to local initiative, which can then be appropriately regulated:

Just try to have a repair done in your apartment. You have to find a moonlighter, who will steal his materials on some construction site, so that in any case they come out of state supplies. Don't we have enough sense to size up the situation realistically?[71]

At the 27th Party Congress, Gorbachëv recommended that enterprises be allowed to sell off above-plan output and unused materials and equipment; that cooperative and individual housing be encouraged; and that individuals be permitted to supply consumer services. In recent weeks the Politburo has been discussing measures to implement these ideas.[72]

However, the line between individual enterprise and "unearned income" will be hard to draw and harder still to stick to. Gorbachëv was careful at the 27th Party Congress to emphasize the difference: "While cutting off unearned income, we must not allow a shadow to fall on those who receive extra pay through honest labor."[73] Once individual entrepreneurs start to make money and to draw substantial resources, the temptation will be irresistible to step in with restrictions and

[67]See M. S. Gorbachëv, "Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—Report of General Secretary of the CPSU CC Comrade M. S. Gorbachëv," *Pravda*, Feb. 26, 1986.

[68]"Steadfastly Advance," *Pravda*, May 18, 1985.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Lately there has been a good deal of discussion in the Soviet press over the definition of unearned income. For an informative recent sample, see A. Shokin, "Where Do Unearned Incomes Come From?" *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta*, No. 15, 1986, p. 10.

[71]"Steadfastly Advance," *Pravda*, May 18, 1985.

[72]Ibid., Mar. 29, 1986.

[73]Gorbachëv's report to 27th Party Congress, ibid., Feb. 26, 1986.

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regulations. Gorbachëv himself stipulated that individuals providing services must do so under the aegis of established collective bodies. From there to instituting output targets, price controls, and supply plans will be but a step.[74] And that will put new life into the second economy.

The leadership's main concern about unearned income is that it weakens collectivism and leads to a "private-property mentality." Throughout his speech to the Party Congress Gorbachëv contrasted the virtues of collectivism to the evils of individualism. Gorbachëv reaffirmed the collectivist foundations of Marxism, calling for collective incentive systems, collective observance of public festivals, and the like. Rewards need not be equal, but unequal rewards should go to collectives, not to individuals.[75] Gorbachëv sounded a new note by suggesting that the family might be deemed an acceptable collective unit, for example, in collective farming contracts. Indeed, the stress on the importance of the family was striking throughout Gorbachëv's speech.

The second major aim of the campaign to restore order is to curb abuses of official position and privilege. This too is popular in principle, but potentially explosive in practice, especially when it comes to the privileges of party cadres. Shortly before the 27th Party Congress, *Pravda* had the daring to publish a letter criticizing party privileges.[76] This brought a sharp rebuke at the Congress from party secretary Ligachëv, although other speakers appeared divided on the issue. Some, like Volgograd obkom First Secretary Vladimir Kalashnikov, echoed Ligachëv. Others, like Moscow First Secretary Yel'tsin, Bashkir First Secretary Midkhat Shakirov, and Party Control Commission Chairman Mikhail Solomentsev, called for greater accountability and review of party cadres. Clearly, the strategy of building authority by strengthening order and social justice cannot be pursued very far without becoming controversial and divisive, both within the elite and among the population at large. The root of the problem is that both the elite and the public are ambivalent over the line between individualism and collectivism, over definitions of legitimate income, and finally, over the thorny issue of equity and privilege.

In sum, the approach used in both of Gorbachëv's major programs contains much that is familiar from the past. It relies heavily on political mobilization, intervention, and pressure from the center; the programs are highly ambitious and will strain resources and foster unbalanced planning. Consequently, they are unlikely to succeed as currently designed. But unlike the initial programs of Brezhnev and Khrushchev, Gorbachëv's approach contains a strong reformist element from the start, and is therefore potentially different. In the past, the reformist element has been weakened during implementation. Will it now, on the contrary, be strengthened?

Reformist Vitality

Though one may think of the Soviet elite as divided between friends and foes of change, one should not imagine that their positions remain immutable. Both conservatives and reformers have reflected on the recent decade of economic stagnation and political drift, and there has occurred on both sides a complex process of learning. By the time of Brezhnev's death, one could discern two broadly different diagnoses of what had gone wrong with the system and what needed to be done about it. By caricaturizing only slightly, it is possible to call one diagnosis "economizing" and the other "technological." Both start from the same proposition, namely that the core problem of the Soviet economy today is poor productivity. But for the economizers the chief culprits are risk-averse managers and lazy workers, who are themselves products of bad economic mechanisms and incentives. The technological view, by contrast, blames bad machines, poor planning, weak investment, and timid innovation.

Both views agree on the need for discipline and order—hence the initial popularity of that line—and both call for changes in the economic structure and in the system of incentives. But ultimately the two have very different priorities. For an economizer such as Tat'yana Zaslavskaya, the main thing is to improve the performance of workers and managers by improving incentives, above all in agriculture and light industry. For a technologist such as Konstantin Val'tukh, the foremost requirement is more and better investment, above all in manufacturing.[77]

Gorbachëv's earlier career in agriculture, his speeches and writings once he had moved to Moscow, and the rumors circulating in Moscow before his accession, all suggested that he would be an "econo-

[74]Indeed, that step is already being taken, as is evident from the new controls imposed by the latest agricultural decree. See *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta*, No. 15, 1986, p. 4.

[75]This had been one of the principal themes of Andropov as well, see "The Teaching of Karl Marx," loc. cit.

[76]See T. Samolis, "Purification" *Pravda*, Feb. 13, 1986.

[77]This basic division recalls earlier debates over agricultural policy, particularly in the mid-1960's. In those debates Brezhnev took the "technological" view that only massive investment in agricultural infrastructure could bring a radical modernization of the countryside, while Kosygin advocated the "economizing" position, stressing economic methods and better management.

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mizer." The man one might have taken for the archetypal technologist was Romanov, who had presided over a decade of far-reaching technological modernization in Leningrad.[78]

Yet the surprise of Gorbachëv's first year was that he behaved more like a technologist than an economizer. He stressed industry far more than agriculture,[79] scientific revolution and organizational redrawing more than prices or incentives, and investment rather than consumption. Despite two important moves—an enlargement of the garden plot program and the creation of a new State Agro-Industrial Committee (Gosagroprom)—Gorbachëv almost seemed to avoid agriculture, especially the issue of local farm management.[80]

Throughout his first year, Gorbachëv's proposals for change seemed timid and conventional. Though he spoke of changing the economic mechanism, he had little to say that was concrete or insightful about the difficult issues involved, particularly prices and performance indicators. Instead, Gorbachëv seemed to show a fatal fondness for redrawing the organizational chart, the classic device of all his predecessors. Thus, the elimination of the industrial associations, the merger of a half dozen agricultural agencies into Gosagroprom, and the creation of hazily defined new conglomerates for energy and civilian machine-building were entirely within the bounds of the past. Was this political calculation, a tactical maneuver to play to the group of technocrats who were his initial appointees? Was it a reflection of Gorbachëv's real priorities? Or did Gorbachëv's early moves simply show that he, like Andropov in his early months, had "no ready recipes"?

At any rate, Gorbachëv's speech at the 27th Party Congress marked a definite change. After sounding the by then familiar themes of industry and technology, Gorbachëv announced some real innovations in agricultural policy. Farmers would be assigned fixed five-year procurement targets; anything produced above that amount could be disposed of "according to the farmers' own judgment." For certain types of basic produce, farmers would have the option of settling part of their procurement obligation through a money tax, a policy that Gorbachëv described as an adaptation of the Leninist tax-in-kind (*prodnalog*), which was the central feature of the New Economic Policy of the 1920's. These initiatives have since been spelled out in an official decree.[81]

With the word "*prodnalog*," Gorbachëv clearly crossed a symbolic divide: until then, he had refrained from making public references to NEP.[82] But he went even further by calling for a "radical reform" and citing Lenin's use of the same expression in defense of an overhaul of financial policy, including prices.

Which is the real Gorbachëv? It is instructive to compare Gorbachëv's positions at the 27th Party Congress and thereafter to the most outspoken statement of the economizing position, namely, the famous Zaslavskaya "secret report," leaked to the West in the summer of 1983.[83] Zaslavskaya's analysis of the ills of the Soviet system can be summed up in four major points: (1) the country is saddled with an economic mechanism that was appropriate in the 1930's but is outmoded today; in particular, it is based on administrative commands rather than economic signals. (2) Its incentive mechanism is based on a narrow vision of worker motivation that may have fit when workers were hungry and docile, but which fails to actuate them now. (3) The system is also based on a naive ideal of social justice that ignores the reality of contradictory interests (however "non-antagonistic" these may be in a socialist society). (4) Attempts by the center to deal with the resulting problems through coercion will inevitably backfire, since workers and peasants today have many ways of evading or ignoring commands from the center. Instead, workers must be given a meaningful sense of participation in their work, and the work itself must be made more pleasant and fulfilling.

How much of this diagnosis did Gorbachëv appear to adopt at the 27th Party Congress? On the first point, which is the most sensitive doctrinally, Gorbachëv echoed Zaslavskaya's position:

The forms of productive relations now in effect . . . took shape under conditions of extensive development of the economy. They have gradually grown obsolete, have begun to lose their stimulative role, and in some respects have become a brake.[84]

Gorbachëv also agreed that more economic signals and direct money exchange are needed in place of administrative mechanisms:

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[78]Blair A. Ruble, "Romanov's Leningrad," *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1983, pp. 36–48.

[79]Gorbachëv gave only one major speech on the subject of agriculture until the Party Congress, an address in Tselinograd in September 1985.

[80]He was publicly prodded for this by Zaslavskaya. See *Izvestiya* (Moscow), June 1, 1985.

[81]The official summary of the decree can be found in *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta*, No. 15, 1986, pp. 2, 4–5.

[82]This was so noticeable that Moscow wags quipped that Gorbachëv was in favor of NEP all right—but that in his lexicon it stood for "*navesti elementarnyy poryadok*" (imposing basic order).

[83]Tat'yana Zaslavskaya, "Doklad o neobkhodimosti boleye uglublënnogo izucheniya v SSSR sotsial'nogo mekhanizma razvitiya ekonomiki" (On the Necessity to Study More Profoundly in the USSR the Social Mechanism of Economic Development), as printed by RFE/RL, *Materialy samizdata* (Munich), Issue 35/83, Aug. 26, 1983.

[84]Gorbachëv's report to the 27th Party Congress, *Pravda*, Feb. 26, 1986.

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It is time to overcome the bias against commodity-money relations and their underuse in planning practice . . . . If, for example, it is necessary and justified to use economic norms instead of particular directive indicators, that does not signify a departure from the principles of planned management . . . .[85]

Gorbachëv has also consistently acknowledged the growing sophistication of consumer wants and at the 27th Party Congress referred repeatedly to the need to provide "moral" incentives alongside material ones,[86] to improve worker participation, and to make work more creative.

Gorbachëv was understandably more cautious about acknowledging the center's limited power to control evasion or disobedience below, but he has shown an awareness of the problem, as for example in his speech in Tol'yatti in April 1986:

Here's what one occasionally hears: "The Party Congress adopted good decisions, but at the local level everything is as before. Help us to make order." Of course we will help, we will make demands and raise questions. But to speak frankly—can every question really be resolved from the center?[87]

In short, Gorbachëv appears to have adopted the essence of the economizers' positions, but with a conservative twist that is more than tactical. There are two words, just as symbolic as "*reforma*" and "*prodnalog*" that Gorbachëv has not used in public so far, and they are "*interes*" (interest) and "*rynok*" (market).[88] If he did, that would imply much greater acceptance of limits to the power of the center than Gorbachëv is apparently willing to consider.

Gorbachëv gives the impression of being a man with a basically conservative temperament, one who envisages the future as technological and centrally-managed, and who remains unshaken in his belief that economic acceleration and efficiency can be combined with central planning. He would probably settle for the 1965 Kosygin reforms if he could, but appears to recognize that he cannot. The reformist themes in his speeches have become stronger, not weaker, over the past year and are still gaining.

Opposition to Reformism

But it is clear that there is widespread opposition to Gorbachëv's programs. In her "secret report," Zaslavskaya gave a list of the opponents of reform that included just about everybody. Gorbachëv is only slightly more optimistic. In his speeches he claims to see popular support for order and discipline, for peace, for higher living standards and faster growth, but nowhere does he claim to see a constituency for reform. On the contrary, Gorbachëv acknowledges widespread if mostly covert resistance and opposition, and above all enormous inertia, at every level of Soviet society. The signs are that in the past year Gorbachëv and his allies had to struggle especially hard with the planners. The Politburo rejected four drafts of the 12th Five-Year Plan, the review of which started even before Gorbachëv's accession. If one compares what Gorbachëv finally got with what he originally said he wanted, it looks as though he was obliged to compromise.[89]

Resistance to changes in the economic mechanism has been especially great. As Gorbachëv said in his Congress speech, "Unfortunately . . . any change in the economic mechanism is regarded as almost a retreat from the principles of socialism." Other speakers were even more explicit, for example, Mikhail Shkabardnya, head of a key electronics ministry:

The impression is created that the planning organs, who are in thrall to established methods of management, are more preoccupied with polemics about tinkering with the economic mechanism than with a real overhaul.[90]

But resistance is just as strong at lower levels, among the middle-level officials who stand to lose power. In words reminiscent of Gogol's tales, Shkabardnya's reform-minded chief planner described a mythical character, Iks Igrekovich Zetov, the covert opponent of reform who works in the bowels of the system:

Our enterprises have to follow an instruction book 200 pages long containing 208 plan indicators. Behind each one there lurks an official named Iks Igrekovich Zetov, who will fight for each indicator because his job depends on it. Iks Igrekovich won't give up without a fight, don't imagine otherwise.[91]

[85]Ibid.

[86]The word Gorbachëv actually used, "*dukhovnyy*," is better translated as "spiritual."

[87]Speech of Comrade M. S. Gorbächev at the Meeting with the Workers of Tol'yatti City, *Pravda*, Apr. 9, 1986.

[88]In his Congress speech, Gorbachëv does use the word "market" at one point, but in a neutral sense—"We must fill the market with a diversity of goods and services."

[89]See Hewett, loc. cit.; and Philip Hanson, "Gorbachëv's First Year: the Economy," *Radio Liberty Research*, RL 68/86, Feb. 11, 1986.

[90]See Shkabardynya's speech, *Pravda*, Feb. 27, 1986.

[91]Ye. Panov, "The Enterprise Decides," *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya*, July 19, 1985, p. 2.

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In reality, it is probably only partly accurate to think of Soviet society as split between friends and foes of change. Rather, there is some of both, if in varying proportions, inside every Soviet citizen. To capitalize on the desire for change while disarming the ever-present Iks Igrekovich, Gorbachëv blends the themes of change and stability. Nearly all of his formulas come in pairs: he calls for both discipline and reform, condemns both unearned income and levelling, stresses both central planning and local autonomy, advocates youth but also experience, promises both a "demanding" but also a "caring" attitude toward cadres. Through such attention to balance and dosage, Gorbachëv has been working for a consensus, as Andropov did before him.

But consensus-building alone is not enough; Gorbachëv is attempting to split the opposition by singling out official enemies and scapegoats while rewarding the rest. The ministries, the industrial associations, and the corrupt local party machines are the targets, while younger party cadres and industrial experts are promoted and rewarded. Resistance may reach high up, however; even in the newly-promoted leadership there are mixed views about change, though they do not amount to organized opposition. At the 27th Party Congress, Prime Minister Ryzhkov was noticeably reticent about reform; Minister Shkabardnya, about the "human factor"; oblast First Secretary Gennadiy Vedernikov, about farmers' profits; Ligachëv, about subjecting party privileges to public scrutiny; regional politicians, about canceling big new projects; and so forth. In contrast, several secretaries like Yel'tsin, Dzhumbar Patiashvili of Georgia, Vladimir Kalashnikov of Volgograd, and Yuriy Petrov of Sverdlovsk went further than Gorbachëv in calling for changes. But so far these are only variations around the common themes of Gorbachëv's coalition.

Authority-Building Strategy

Every general secretary since Stalin has faced the problem of adapting the Soviet system's traditional values to new circumstances. The requirements of a modern society and economy drive today's Soviet leaders toward a truth that is particularly difficult for descendants of Bolshevism: to maintain control one must partially surrender control. This point departs so sharply from Soviet practice that it is hardly surprising that Gorbachëv's predecessors shrank from it and that even now, after a decade of near-crisis, the Soviet elite and Gorbachëv himself find it supremely hard to accept.

Boris Yel'tsin, left, seen talking with a delegate at the Kremlin Hall of Congresses during an intermission at the 27th CPSU Congress.

–TASS from SOVFOTO.

As a result, the most apparent characteristic trait of Gorbachëv's approach to policy is ambivalence. He does not break decisively with the centralizing, mobilizational style of the past, and his policies are an uneasy mixture of conservative and reformist elements. His economic strategy has raised popular expectations; yet it depends for its success on an immediate burst of productivity from below, for which the only real inducements so far are pressure, exhortation, and promises. Gorbachëv's two major programs send conflicting signals to all levels of the system. Since managers must choose which signal to follow, they will probably play safe. Yet, if Gorbachëv cannot show results quickly, his momentum could weaken and opposition could soon mount.

Nevertheless, Gorbachëv's way may be the only politically feasible one. Any reform is at once an adaptation and a reaffirmation of established values. Equally important, the mixture of conservative and reformist elements in his approach has some tactical advantages. On the "macro" level, the infusion of new resources into sectors long starved for them is likely to produce an initial rush of real progress; so will the sheer stimulus of change and the immediate effects of the discipline campaign.[92] In addition—to put it cyni-

[92]For a good discussion of this point, see Vladimir Kontorovich, "Discipline and Growth in the Soviet Economy," *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1985, pp. 18–31.

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cally—Gorbachëv can count on the Soviet statistical system to show substantial progress in every category. Much of that will be inflation and gold-plating; but even the *appearance* of results will give Gorbachëv valuable political momentum and time.

On the "micro" level, people will know from their shopping bags whether the progress is real. But here too Gorbachëv has strong cards. The first is his apparent determination, especially evident in the weeks since the 27th Party Congress, to take bold measures to cut waste and to stimulate local initiative in services and farming. Everything depends on whether people will see something to be gained if they take a chance, and something to be lost if they stand in the way. This last point brings us back to cadres policy and the interaction of power and authority.

III. INTERACTION OF POWER AND AUTHORITY

Power and authority naturally affect one another. Effectiveness in policy builds authority, which in turn adds to power by weakening the constraints on its use and by enhancing its effects. At the same time, power judiciously used reinforces effectiveness in policy (for example, through the appointment of able people) and thus contributes to authority. A general secretary who wishes to have either must therefore look to both.

Gorbachëv already appears to have recovered much of the general secretary's traditional basis of power. The evidence for this is not so much the simple fact of turnover, but rather the signs that the machinery for cadres control has been refurbished, that local patronage systems have been broken up or appear about to be, and that Gorbachëv has resurrected old techniques and put them to new uses. Whatever long-term forces may be at work in the political system, the loosening of central control that took place under Brezhnev now appears to have been due above all to the latter's own personality, style of rule, and the circumstances under which he came to power. Gorbachëv's first year, in contrast, seems more like a reversion to the familiar power-building style of Khrushchev and even Stalin.

Gorbachëv's authority-building strategy likewise reverts to some themes and points of style not seen since Khrushchev. Gorbachëv's approach has the populism, the zest for change and experimentation, and even some of the confrontational manner of Khrushchev. Like him, Gorbachëv plays to popular expectations, and he leans heavily on the party apparatus (in both senses of the word).

However, Gorbachëv's approach also shares the weaknesses of his predecessors' authority-building strategies. His goals strain the available resources, and his plans are taut. His programs rely heavily on political intervention and pressure. Since Gorbachëv also stresses local initiative and autonomy, the signals he is sending through the system are ambiguous.

The resolution of these ambiguities will depend partly on how Gorbachëv's own thinking evolves in response to the early results of his programs. But an equally important issue will be whether he can make his power and his authority work in tandem, one reinforcing the other. In this respect, Khrushchev and Brezhnev are negative models: Khrushchev overused his power while Brezhnev underused his, yet in the end both lost authority. Can Gorbachëv do better?

The immense turnover of the last year has brought in a mixed group of people, none of whom are very young and most of whom already were in high positions under Brezhnev. They are undoubtedly as anxious as Gorbachëv to get the economy moving, but there is little in their background (though no less than in Gorbachëv's) to suggest the economic sophistication and openness of mind required to deal with the uncertainties and upheavals that necessarily attend real change. So there is a real question whether Gorbachëv's cadres policy is effectively serving the reformist element in his programs.

This problem will grow more pressing as reform proceeds. Local autonomy and initiative, if truly implemented, will produce new winners and losers throughout the political system. Gorbachëv must use his control over cadres to encourage the winners and to protect both them and himself from the losers. Only then will his strategies for building power and authority be in balance. At this point, all one can say is that the necessary levers have been readied; it is still too soon to say how persistently they will be used.

One point that augurs well for persistence is the striking continuity between Gorbachëv's approach to power and authority and Andropov's. Nearly all of the officials appointed under Andropov are still in office or have been promoted—with the one major exception of Romanov.[93] The essential policy themes are also the same, especially the combination of discipline and apparent willingness to consider new economic solutions (although one might argue that Andropov laid

[93]For example, the only RSFSR obkoms to have changed hands under both Andropov and Gorbachëv are Leningrad (Zaykov to the Politburo), Tomsk, and Krasnodar (Mel'nikov and Razumovskiy to the heads of Central Commiittee departments). One obkom secretary appointed under Chernenko has also moved up under Gorbachëv—Vlasov of Rostov, now Minister of Internal Affairs.

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more stress on discipline, while Gorbachëv emphasizes incentives). The main difference is that while Andropov admitted in November 1982 that he had no ready recipes for change, by April 1985 Gorbachëv had developed the outlines of the approach he has pursued, though with gradually increasing detail, especially in agricultural policy.

The test of Gorbachëv's power and authority will come when he is forced to face the ambiguities in his programs and to challenge some of his own and Andropov's appointees. This test may not come right away, because Gorbachëv will gain leeway for a while from the ambiguity of existing success indicators, the recovered power of the general secretary's office, and the availability of scapegoats as well as promising candidates for promotion.

Gorbachëv is further aided by the collective learning that has taken place in the entire elite over the last two decades. If the reformist impulse prevails over the conservative one this time, it will be partly because three crucial conditions may now be present that were previously lacking: (1) broad agreement that the status quo cannot continue; (2) some realistic diagnosis of the problems; and (3) a set of practical measures. These decades have witnessed a gradual learning about all three, which has not produced consensus but which has evidently moved a core of influential people (including Gorbachëv himself) toward a common perception of crisis and a greater shared understanding of the properties and limits of their own system.

Gorbachëv's popular support might also endure even if his programs do not succeed at first. Gorbachëv could very well have been right last year when he told his Leningrad audience what sort of leader he thought the population wanted:

People love leaders who are strict, organized, demanding, who show concern, who show through their personal example a conscientious attitude to state business. And they always support such leaders.[94]

But ultimately Gorbachëv's success in restoring full power and authority to the general secretary's office will depend on his ability to revitalize the system. No politician could have come to this task with greater advantages; few could have used them better. But the hard part is only beginning.

[94]"Steadfastly Advance," *Pravda*, May 18, 1985.

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Realities of Gorbachëv's Economic Program

Boris Rumer

The dramatic events in Soviet internal politics in the first half of the 1980's have coincided with an equally dramatic development in the Soviet economy: an unprecedented decline in the rate of growth of fundamental economic inputs—manpower, raw materials and fuel, and capital investment. According to data reported by Soviet economist Abel Agenbegyan, the first half of the present decade saw a 3 percent increase in the size of the Soviet labor force, a 5 percent increase in the output of the extractive industries, and a 17 percent increase in capital investment. Each figure marks a sharp decline from the past: in the second half of the 1970's, the respective growth indices were 6, 10, and 23 percent; and in the first half of that decade, they were 6, 26, and 44 percent. Moreover, Agenbegyan predicted that in the second half of the 1980's, expansion in the amounts of these basic inputs will decelerate still more.[1]

This growing resource constriction has compelled Soviet economic theoreticians to revise their basic paradigm for economic planning and to seek to achieve planned results with a minimum expenditure of resources. The result is a quest for "intensification" pursued with all the intensity of earlier campaigns such as those for "electrification" and "industrialization."

It is one thing to proclaim such goals, another to realize them. All evidence suggests that the current campaign is not faring very well. According to Dmitriy Chernikov, deputy director of a research institute of the State Planning Committee (Gosplan), the role played by intensification in Soviet economic growth has actually been decreasing in recent years. A macroeconomic analysis of Soviet growth—using production functions—conducted by his institute found that productivity's share as a factor in national income growth had declined from 40 percent in 1966–70 to 25 percent in 1981–82.[2]

Nor did the passing of Leonid Brezhnev change this pattern of slowdown. Indeed, in the years 1984 and 1985, growth in Soviet national income was at its lowest levels for the entire postwar period—a mere 2.4 and 3.1 percent. In the same period, there was a sharp cutback in the growth of investment. Production of oil, of coal, and of many types of machines and equipment actually declined. The share of national income (which includes mainly consumption and net investment) in Soviet gross social production declined from 47 percent in 1981–82 to 41 percent in 1983–84; over the same period, capital productivity rose only 2.5 percent, and labor productivity increased by a mere 0.5 percent.[3]

The Soviet economy is clearly in severe straits, although it may be premature to declare it in a state of "crisis," if by that one means the imminence of structural collapse or conditions threatening the very survival of the system. Apocalyptic predictions must be viewed with a heavy dose of skepticism. Soviet economic history teaches that even the most productive phases of development have not been without serious hardships, shortages, and other difficulties.

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[1]A. Aganbegyan, "Important Positive Shifts in the Economic Life of the Country," *EKO* (Novosibirsk), No. 6, 1984, p. 9.

[2]D. Chernikov, "Scientific-Technological Progress and Structural Shifts in Social Production," *Ekonomika i Matematicheskiye Metody* (Moscow), No. 4, 1984, p. 593.

[3]*Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSSR v 1984 g.* (The National Economy of the USSR in 1984—hereafter, *Narkhoz 1984*), Moscow, Finansy i Statistika, 1985, p. 53, 56, 166, 177–83, 375, 425; also *Pravda* (Moscow), Jan. 26, 1986, p. 1.

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Soviet Premier Nikolay Ryzhkov delivers his report on "Guidelines of the Economic and Social Development of the USSR in 1986-90 and for the Period to 2000" at the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on March 3, 1986; seated behind Ryzhkov, from left to right, are Yegor Ligachëv, Mikhail Gorbachëv, and Andrey Gromyko.

–TASS from SOVFOTO.

The Soviet economic predicament, I would submit, need not be either irreversible or irreparable. But a turn-around is possible only under conditions of fundamental reforms in the economic system. It is precisely such a transformation that many had come to expect from the new leadership under Mikhail Gorbachëv. Indeed, the expectations even extended beyond the economy to include the possibility of a liberalization of all spheres of public and cultural life.

Propagandists in the party bureaucracy did not shy away from exploiting and manipulating this spontaneous enthusiasm of the general population regarding the young and dynamic new leader: this undertaking began even while former General Secretary Konstantin Chernenko was still alive. Robert Kaiser of *The Washington Post,* returning from Moscow in September 1984, reported widespread rumors there that Gorbachëv was strongly interested in the reformist work of Arkadiy Stolypin.[4] One can well imagine the effect of such a rumor upon nationalistic members of the Russian intelligentsia, for whom Stolypin is the epitome of a prescient, patriotic statesman, since he engineered an economic reform to save Russia at a critical juncture in its history. In a vein common to all the Soviet media, *Pravda* of November 13, 1985, wrote of "a spirit of renewal and life-giving draughts . . . blowing through the great Soviet house, driving out the stagnant odors." And the poet Andrey Voznesenskiy wrote on the eve of 1986: "Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, rejoice at the new spirit over the land! Rejoice in the storm that is blowing away those perched in exalted ranks! [But] it is not enough just to throw out the Bourbons; one must find a new path."[5]

To be sure, the new leader has replaced many old Bourbons, and his first months as party general secretary were marked by a surfeit of speeches full of

[4]See his "Exhausted Empire Faces up to Shortfall," *The Washington Post*, Sept. 23, 1984.

[5]*Pravda*, Dec. 30, 1985, p. 3.

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promises, summonses, and challenges to undertake decisive and (a favorite adjective) "undeferrable" actions to achieve a major transformation in the economy. But his zeal for "transformation" waned markedly toward the end of 1985, and his verbose report at the 27th CPSU Congress was barely distinguishable from Brezhnev's cliché-ridden rhetoric. In reality, the new General Secretary has so far undertaken no radical steps to revive the economy—which speaks tomes about both his acumen and possibly also his indecisiveness. Instead, he is basically engaged in patching up and repairing—using old techniques inherited from his predecessors.

Primacy of Politics

The problem is that Gorbachëv can act only within the limits of the existing system based upon the authority of the party bureaucracy. Thus a fundamental transformation of the economy is possible only if the structure of power itself is changed. The rigidly centralized system of economic management has achieved consummate development as a model for the comprehensive exercise of control over the economy by the central party bureaucracy. Each sector of the economy is controlled and directed by a corresponding department of the Central Committee of the CPSU (machine-building, chemical, agricultural, construction, transportation, etc.) through the transmission belt of the respective sectoral ministry. The current system has been consolidating since 1965 (when Brezhnev eliminated Khrushchev's *sovnarkhozy*), and it is difficult to imagine an alternative that would preserve for the central party apparatus the same primacy of political power over the economy. That some in the USSR express hopes for a decentralization of economic management—which would entail weakening of this control—reflects the ineradicable naïveté of the given segment of the Soviet intelligentsia.

It is characteristic of the true state of affairs that shortly after the appearance of the famous memorandum of Academician Tat'yana Zaslavskaya (criticizing the brutal centralization of economic management, hinting that certain circles were dedicated to its preservation, and urging a shift to economic rather than political-administrative management of the economy), there appeared in the leading theoretical and political journal of the CPSU Central Committee, *Kommunist,* an article stressing "a political approach to the economy."[6] The author, P. Ignatovskiy, chief editor of Gosplan's authoritative journal *Planovoye Khozyaystvo,* quoted from Lenin:"Politics must have priority over the economy, and to think anything else would be contrary to the ABC's of Marxism." He further cited Lenin:

We do not need new decrees, new institutions, new methods of struggle. We need to check the suitability of people and to verify actual implementation.

What was needed, Ignatovskiy claimed, was "firmness of state direction over production." Significantly, this article appeared when General Secretary Yuriy Andropov was already bedridden and Gorbachëv in effect was directing the work of the Politburo. The article seemed designed to rein in over-zealous advocates of reform and reassure the party apparatus that the new leadership, despite all its reformist rhetoric, had no intention of altering the basic power structure.

Gorbachëv's behavior seems to confirm his firm commitment to the Leninist principle of political predominance in economic affairs. The consequences of such an approach are readily apparent in Soviet agriculture, a sector that Gorbachëv once controlled as a Central Committee secretary. Brezhnev sharply augmented investment in the Soviet agro-industrial complex, increasing the sector's share of total Soviet investment to a surprisingly high 38 percent.[7] Yet such gargantuan investments and a substantial increase in the use of machinery and fertilizer did not prevent a decline in the productivity of agriculture. Harvests shrank even in areas with the most fertile soil. Indeed, over the last three decades, the USSR has lost a third of its surface stratum of humus.[8] Although expenditures on agricultural production increased by 42 percent in the 1970's, both labor productivity and productivity per hectare declined by more than 50 percent.[9] In 1980, more than half of all collective and state farms were operating in the red.[10]

Over the past quarter-century, Soviet leaders have issued countless decrees (more than 250) encompassing every aspect of production and nonproduction spheres of agriculture. But not once has official doubt ever been expressed about the wisdom of retaining the kolkhoz-sovkhoz system. Everyone knows

[6]"On a Political Approach to the Economy," *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 12, 1983. Tat'yana Zaslavskaya, *Doklad o neobkhodimosti boleye uglublënnogo izucheniya v SSSR sotsial'nogo mekhanizma razvitiya ekonomiki* (Report on the Need for Deeper Study in the USSR of the Social Mechanism of Economic Development), as printed by Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty, *Materialy samizdata* (Munich), No. 35-83, Aug. 20, 1983.

[7]V. Garbuzov, "The Food Program and Tasks of Finance Organs," *Finansy SSSR* (Moscow), No. 7, 1982, p. 6.

[8]*Voprosy Ekonomiki* (Moscow), No. 1, 1986, p. 88.

[9]P. Klemyshev, "The Technical and Economic Level of Agricultural Production," *Voprosy Ekonomiki,* No. 3, 1984, pp. 82–83.

[10]Garbuzov, loc. cit., p. 6.

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that this system is the crux of the problem in rural production, and that measures such as an expansion of the private sector in agriculture are the only road to productivity. To be sure, Gorbachëv did raise the topic of the family farm during his address to the 27th Party Congress.[11] However, the idea struck little resonance among others who addressed the Congress, and nothing in the leader's comments suggested an inclination to liquidate the kolkhoz-sovkhoz system. To deviate from the existing system in such a manner would mean the triumph of an economic over a political approach.

Planning for the 12th Five-Year Period

The primacy of political over economic interests is evident in the 12th Five-Year Plan, adopted by the 27th CPSU Congress. The chief political decision underlying this plan—the relative shares of national income to be distributed to current consumption and to investment—must have been reached under truly dramatic circumstances. The preceding five-year plan (for 1981–85) had explicitly targeted an increase in the share of the consumption fund, at the expense of investment.[12] But when anticipated revitalization and increased effectiveness in the investment sphere did not materialize, it proved necessary to increase investments and make cutbacks in consumption. The share accorded to consumption declined from 76 percent in 1980 to 73 percent in 1984. Production of consumer goods, as a share of total industrial production, declined from 26 percent in 1980 to 25 percent in 1984. Over the same period, the annual rate of growth in new housing declined from 8 percent to virtually nil. Moreover, the share of investment going to industries in "Group B" (those producing consumer goods), which was supposed to rise in 1981–85, sank to a postwar low of 4 percent, while the share of investment going to "Group A" industries (those manufacturing producer goods) was at 31.5 percent. The share of investment in housing construction, health care, trade, and other social and consumer sectors of the Soviet economy fell from 35.4 percent of total investment in 1966–70 to 29.7 percent in 1981–84. During the same period, the

[11]M. S. Gorbachëv, "Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—Report of General Secretary of the CPSU CC Comrade M. S. Gorbachëv," *Pravda*, Feb. 26, 1986.

[12]See Premier Nikolay Tikhonov's report to the 26th CPSU Congress, *XXVI S"yezd KPSS: Stenograficheskiy otchët* (The 26th CPSU Congress: Stenographic Report), Moscow, Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoy Literatury, 1981, p. 17.

Spring sowing in 1985 at the Shirokoye State Farm in the Crimea.

–TASS from SOVFOTO.

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share of total investment going to light industry and the food industry fell from 12.2 percent to 10 percent.[13]

It was against this backdrop that the Soviet leadership set out its priorities for the 12th FYP. In the realm of macroeconomic choices there appeared to be essentially two alternative courses to be pursued:

- The regime could reduce the growth of investment and restructure industry by focusing investment on one sector at the expense of others (on machine-building, at the expense of extractive industry, including the oil and gas sectors). Under these conditions, economic growth would—in the short term—decelerate even more substantially. But the concept would be to "retreat now in order to move ahead later."

- Or the leadership could increase investment in heavy industry across the board at the expense of consumption, and restructure industry amidst a simultaneous growth of overall production.[14]

In February 1984, Gosplan research official Vadim Kirichenko insisted on the need to increase the growth of investments in the 12th FYP. In contrast, Aganbegyan declared in June that the growth of investment in the 12th FYP would be half that registered in the 11th FYP.[15] Clearly a debate had commenced. On one side were adherents of the traditional hard line, who insisted upon increasing investment at the expense of consumption. On the other side were those who postulated the need for a "radical reform," one that could activate the reserves of the economy. This could raise productivity without increasing investment and thereby permit the maintenance or even raising of the level of consumption, which would, in turn, make more realistic the effort to expand the use of material incentives to spur effective economic performance.

In a June 1985 speech, Gorbachëv seemed to evade this critical issue, although his discussion of various "maneuvers" or changes in the structure of investments could be construed as favoring the reformist approach.[16] But in the fall of 1985—during the final stages of preparation of the 12th FYP—forces favorable to the conservatives appeared to gain the ascendancy. The retirement of Gosplan's 75-year-old chairman, Nikolay Baybakov (an irreconcilable foe of decentralization and economic liberalization),[17] was misconstrued by many as a defeat of the neo-Stalinists; actually, Baybakov retained his membership on the Central Committee at the 27th Party Congress. And the new Soviet government team of Premier Nikolay Ryzhkov and Gosplan Chairman Nikolay Talyzin, technocrats unduly idealized by some Western analysts, clearly rejected the course of reform and embarked on the second alternative. As Ryzhkov put it at the Congress:

Given its commitment to a course of accelerating [economic growth], the Central Committee of the CPSU has deemed it expedient to increase the tempo of growth of productive capital investment in the 12th Five-Year Plan. Naturally, this entails certain changes in the proportions of distribution of national income —an increase in the share of accumulation [i.e., investment]. This tack is necessary in order to attain both current and strategic goals. In the next [stage] there is the intention to stabilize or even slightly reduce the share of accumulation.[18]

The stress on "accumulation" implied a reduction in the share of consumption, an unpalatable fact Ryzhkov preferred not to state directly. Just what "current and strategic goals" the Soviet leadership have for the economy were suggested in a May 1985 speech by Gorbachëv in Leningrad. He likened the goals of the Soviet economy in the current period to those on the

[13]*Narkhoz 1984*, pp. 426, 132, 435, 379, 381. Aganbegyan erroneously claims that the lower growth rate for investment during the 11th FYP was caused by "reallocation to consumption in order to raise the standard of living." See his "The General Course of Economic Policy," *EKO*, No. 11, 1985, p. 4.

Some sense of the price that the Soviet citizen has had to pay for this reallocation is shown in the case of Tol'yatti, a city of 600,000, described in a resolution of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers as "a new city of automobile-builders, which satisfies every requirement of contemporary urban planning" (see *Avtomobil'naya Promyshlennost* [Moscow], No. 1, 1984, p. 1). According to a more recent account, more than half of the city's population lives in Avtozavodskiy Rayon, which lacks any movie theater, cultural center (*dvorets kul'tury*), park, or swimming pool. The waiting list for places in kindergarten reportedly has thousands and thousands of names on it (see *Literaturnaya Gazeta* [Moscow], Apr. 16, 1986, p. 10).

[14]In 1982, Vadim Kirichenko, director of a Gosplan research institute, observed that "the time has finally come to make a choice between alternative possibilities in investment policy: either to preserve the tendency to reduce the tempo of increases in capital investment, or . . . shift to a regime of increased investment activity. The turning point in this respect should be the 12th Five-Year Plan." See V. Kirichenko, " On Some Questions on the Further Improvement of Planning and Management of the Economy," *Planovoye Khozyaystvo* (Moscow), No. 9, 1982.

[15]Cf. V. Kirichenko, "Improving the Investment Process," *Izvestiya Akademii Nauk SSSR, Seriya Ekonomicheskaya* (Moscow), No. 2, 1984, p. 15, and A. Aganbegyan, "Important Positive Shifts in the Country's Life," *EKO*, No. 6, 1984, p. 10.

[16]M. Gorbachëv, "A Fundamental Question of Party Policy," *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, June 12, 1985, p. 1.

[17]See Boris Rumer, "Structural Imbalance in the Soviet Economy," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), July-August 1984, p. 25.

[18]Nikolay Ryzhkov, "On the Basic Directions of the Economic and Social Development of the USSR in 1986–1990 and in the Period to the Year 2000—Report of the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers N. I. Ryzhkov," *Pravda*, Mar. 4, 1986.

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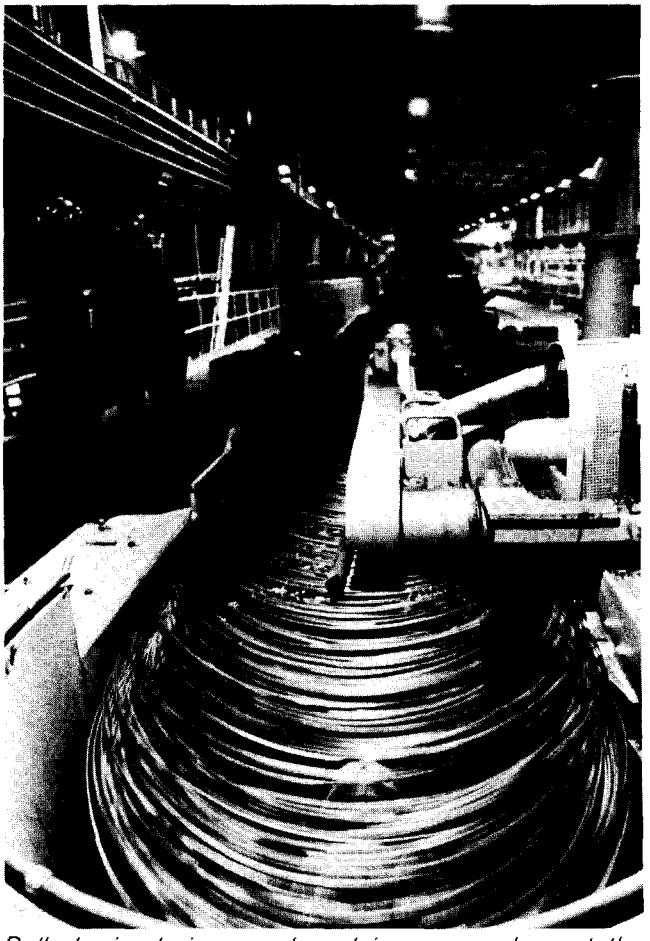

Rolled wire being produced in a new shop at the Byelorussian Metallurgical Works.

–TASS from SOVFOTO.

eve of World War II, when "it was felt that the threat to the socialist government was increasing" and preparations for war were under way. "There will," he said, "be no banking on a tranquil life."[19] The 12th Five-Year Plan's priorities are already evident in the economic plan for 1986, according to which investment is to increase by 7.6 percent—a sharp change from the modest 2.7 percent growth recorded in 1985, and the highest rate since 1975.[20] The economic program of the new leadership proposes to tackle a multitude of problems simultaneously: an energy program, a food program, a complex program for developing consumer goods and improving the service sector, a program for the development of machine-building, and, of course, maintaining the armaments program.

In all the rhetoric there is a startling lack of concreteness. If one strips away the florid phraseology, however, two main tendencies stand out: a grandiose program of reindustrialization, and measures to improve economic management.

The reindustrialization drive stresses the reconstruction and modernization of existing enterprises. An integral component of this approach, indeed its precondition, is a drastic reduction in plans for the introduction of *new* productive capacities. Instead, the main flow of investment (50 percent) is to be directed toward existing capacities; this compares to only 35 percent in 1984.[21] In this process of modernization, the write-off of old machinery and equipment is planned to rise by 2 to 2.5 times. To meet expanded equipment requirements it is planned to increase machine-building output by 40 percent during the period 1986–90.[22]

The second main tendency is the effort to improve economic management through two principal devices: on the one hand, a greater centralization of management; and on the other, a simplification of ties between central ministries and enterprises with an eye to fostering greater independence of decision-making by the latter. The essence of this somewhat abstract formula consists in shifting enterprises to complete business accountancy (*polnyy khozraschët*) and in trying to eliminate unnecessary intermediate links between enterprises and their respective ministries.

Behind the rhetoric, these measures represent an attempt to solve basic economic problems while conserving, or even intensifying, the centralization of management, i.e., to avoid the pain of radical economic reform. It is absurd to advertise them as "new initiatives." Soviet leaders have been trying to implement exactly this program for more than half a century—with scant success. Stalin in his speech to the 17th CPSU Congress in 1934 insisted upon the need to expand the scale of reconstruction, and ever since the early 1970's, when the CPSU Central Committee adopted a resolution on this matter, the theme of redirecting the main thrust of investment into reconstruction and modernization has been stressed.[23] Yet, in 1984, the share of investment going to new projects in industry was 60 percent of the total investments. And despite calls at the 1976 and 1981 party congresses to accelerate the

[19]"Steadfastly Advance," *Kommunist*, No. 8, May 1985, p. 26.

[20]"The Plan for the First Year of the 12th Five-Year Period," an editorial in *Planovoye Khozyaystvo*, No. 1, 1986, p. 7.

[21]See Ryzhkov's report, loc. cit.; and *Narkhoz 1984*, p.381.

[22]Gorbachëv report, loc. cit.; Ryzhkov report, loc. cit, p. 3; and *Narkhoz 1984*, p. 157.

[23]I. V. Stalin, "Responsibility Report to the 17th Party Congress," *Sochineniya* (Works), Vol. 13, p. 312, Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1951; and *KPSS v resolyutziyakh i resheniyakh s'yezdov* (The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses), Moscow, Politizdat, 1978, pp. 153–54.

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Soviet Amortization Policy

The system for amortizing capital that is currently in effect is one of the Soviet economic system's oldest procedures. It took form during the industrialization of the 1920's, when the basic issue was the *creation,* not the *renewal* of capital stock. While the linear method of writing off capital adopted then may have been entirely appropriate under those specific circumstances, it has outlived its utility. With Gorbachëv (like Andropov and Brezhnev before him) urging a speedier renewal of fixed capital, it is essential to adopt a policy of accelerated capital retirement, such as has spurred technological innovation in developed capitalist societies.

The existing system of amortization is based on norms that are differentiated by type of fixed capital. These norms are reviewed by financial authorities of the state in a cumbersome process that takes place at considerable intervals. Thus, the norms introduced in the 1930's continued to apply, with some adjustments, right up until 1963; norms adopted in 1963 remained in effect until 1975; and the 1975 norms remain in effect today, with every indication that they will remain in effect through to the end of the current decade. (The norms introduced on January 1, 1975, were the result of a decree published in 1969.) The use of such norms for such lengthy periods clearly fails to correspond to real or desired rates of technological advance.

The obvious solution would be to adopt techniques of accelerated (regressive) retirement. However, this faces several obstacles. The first of these is ideological. To the Marxist guardians of the Soviet political economy, accelerated amortization is a discredited tool of capitalist monopolies used to cheat the public by concealing profits from taxation, and hence has no validity for a socialist economy.*

Opponents of accelerated amortization also raise objections of a more practical nature. They note, for example, that increases in total amortization under an accelerated schedule would in the first few years raise production costs and hence reduce enterprise profits. Writ large, this would have the unpleasant consequence of at least temporarily reducing Soviet national income statistics.

Finally, such accelerated amortization is possible only if Soviet machine-building industries are capable of replacing the capital being written off according to accelerated schedules. As the discussion in the text demonstrates, this is not the case.

*See, e.g., A. Dodonov, "On Several Problems of the Theory of Amortization," *Ekonomicheskiye Nauki* (Moscow), No. 5, 1973.

writing-off of outmoded fixed capital, such write-offs continue to be exceptionally low—1.3 percent of the existing stock in 1984.[24]

Likewise, the struggle to simplify economic administration and to shift to *khozraschët* commenced with the first five-year plan. Government decrees in 1929 and 1931 sought to simplify the management structure, reinforce the rights of enterprise managers, and shift to the use of financial levers to regulate and control enterprises (in essence, *khozraschët*), but, according to Vyacheslav Molotov, the decrees were not implemented because of "tremendous resistance from the business apparatus."[25] The idea of shifting to a "two-link" system of economic administration—i.e., enterprise and ministry—was proposed at least as early as 1934, when Lazar Kaganovich sang its praises at the 17th CPSU Congress.[26] But nothing has come of the idea in 50 years, which bodes ill for Gorbachëv's current optimism regarding its prospects today.

If the whole program of reconstruction and modernization has drifted helplessly for so many years, if even Stalin—with all his well-known methods—could not establish business accountancy, then it should be clear that there must be serious obstacles to these measures. It is ludicrous to attribute the whole problem to the resistance of the bureaucratic apparatus. The causes must be sought at a deeper level.

Obstacles to Industrial Renovation

The speeches of Gorbachëv and Ryzhkov at the 27th Party Congress highlight reconstruction and technological modernization of existing enterprises as the main thrust of investment policy for the 12th FYP period and indeed for the entire period until the year 2000.[27] At first glance, the program appears feasible and sensible. Theoretically, it would shorten the time period for obtaining results and thereby accelerate the circulation of capital; it would also reduce per unit

[24] *Narkhoz 1984*, p. 157. The figure was 1.4 percent in 1980 (see *Narkhoz 1980*, p. 147).

[25] Raymond Hutchings, *The Structural Origins of Soviet Industrial Expansion*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1984, p. 51. Stalin, too, admitted in a speech before an economic conference in 1931 that the government had not been capable of overcoming this resistance. See ibid., p. 52.

[26] Ibid., p. 43.

[27] Gorbachëv, "Political Report . . . ," loc. cit., and Ryzhkov's report, loc. cit. Gorbachëv had earlier struck this note in programmatic speeches in April and June 1985. See *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Apr. 24, 1985, and *Kommunist*, No. 12, 1985.

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expenditures for increasing capacity; and it would accelerate the introduction of new machinery.

Such calculations ignore certain serious consequences of the approach for the Soviet economy over the longer term. An investment strategy focusing primarily on further development of existing enterprises will mean an overemphasis on the western regions of the USSR, where the vast majority of current industrial capacity is located, where natural resources are exhausted, where the infrastructure is already overloaded, and where ecological limits are being reached. The policy threatens to aggravate the territorial polarization of economic sectors—a manufacturing industry in the western part of the country and an extractive industry in the east. One must also take into account the enormous distances and serious transportation difficulties resulting from such a situation.

But, these arguments aside, there are serious practical obstacles to reconstruction. For one, the existing capital plant of Soviet industry is so aged that modernization will entail substantial, even radical, renovation of buildings and other structures. Indeed, this kind of renovation is devouring the lion's share of investment funds.[28] But such construction draws down on the amounts available for new machinery and equipment.

More important, the investment sphere of the Soviet economy is totally unprepared for the renovation policy: the necessary scientific, design, planning, and machine-building bases are not in place. For example, design organizations have traditionally concentrated on new enterprises, that is, on standard serial projects that are easier to design and hence more profitable for the design organization.

Construction firms avoid renovation projects, where labor intensity is reportedly 20 to 35 percent higher than in new construction.[29] And machine-building enterprises find it more profitable to manufacture serial equipment, rather than the customized machines required for the specific conditions of an enterprise undergoing renovation. Finally, no material incentives are offered to offset for managers the risk of reduced bonuses for failing to meet production targets while renovation is in progress. Managers prefer to construct new plants, for they cannot be assigned production targets for them until construction is completed.

The crux of the program is the renewal of fixed capital and the write-off of outmoded machinery. At the 27th Congress, Ryzhkov announced the need for "serious changes in amortization policy."[30] But how likely is the realization of such a policy? The 1975 "reform" of amortization norms (on the issue of amortization reform, see the box on the facing page) did not succeed in reducing the normal periods of service for fixed capital; indeed, the average term of service for industrial goods rose by 13 percent in the 1970's.[31]

Machine-Building Problems

The principal reason for the slow amortization was that the machine-building industry proved incapable of producing the necessary replacements. Indeed, the beginning of the 1980's was marked by an unprecedented fall-off in the production of important machinery products—turbines, locomotives, gas and oil drilling equipment, diesel and electric motors, metal-cutting machines, transport and construction equipment, and other products. The decline was not only quantitative but qualitative, with the number of new models and the share of such items in total output declining.[32] Symptomatic of the problems was the situation in engine-building: despite a desperate need to expand production of fuel-conserving diesel engines, only 23 percent of truck motors and 1 percent of bus motors currently being produced are diesels.[33]

How seriously are we to treat the 12th Five-Year Plan's goal of a 40 percent increase in output for the machine-building industry over the next five years? For this to occur, there would have to have been a marked upturn in investment in this sector during the 11th FYP period (1981–85), yet 1984 data revealed a drop in the share of investment going to machine-building in comparison with 1980 and a decline in the introduction of new productive capacities in many branches of ma-

[28]Boris Rumer, *Investment and Reindustrialization in the Soviet Economy*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1984, pp. 21–23.

[29]V. Danilov in *Pravda*, Dec. 17, 1980; T. Bakayeva and V. Zadorozhnyy, "Calculating the Influence of Structural Shifts in Construction," *Vestnik Statistiki* (Moscow), No. 10, 1977, p. 18.

[30]Loc. cit.

[31]The acceleration in amortization norms originally proposed by sectoral research institutes were moderated by Gosplan when the 1975 reform was actually instituted. For industry as a whole, the normative length of service of fixed capital was shortened from 29 years to 25.4 years. Moreover, over the period 1972–80, the average lifespan of machinery and equipment increased rather than fell (from 12.5 to 14 years), while the average age of buildings and installations rose from 36.6 to 43.1 years. See Chernikov, loc. cit., p. 594.

[32]See Boris Rumer, "Soviet Investment Policy: Unresolved Problems," *Problems of Communism*, September-October 1982, pp. 53–68.

The President of the USSR Academy of Sciences has reported that domestic producers can meet only one-third of the demand for apparatus and high-tech equipment for research and development work. See A. Aleksandrov, "Introductory Remarks to the Annual General Meeting of the USSR Academy of Sciences," *Vestnik Akademii Nauk SSSR* (Moscow), No. 6, 1982, p. 11.

[33]See N. Smelyakov, "Development of the Homeland's Export Deliveries," *Kommunist*, No. 14, 1984, p. 43.

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Workers at the Volzhskiy Motor Works in Tol'yatti adjust MP-II robots manufactured by the plant for installation at this and other Soviet industrial enterprises.

–TASS from SOVFOTO.

chine-building. Moreover, even if replacement of machinery is to occur at half the planned annual rate of 5 to 6 percent in 1986–90, it would require an increase of 3.5 million tons in the annual output of rolled steel. In 1985, the increase in production of rolled steel was only 0.7 million tons.[34]

True, the 1986–90 plan calls for a new surge in investment. However, it does not appear that there will be much progress toward reducing an excessive emphasis on investment in the extractive sector, a shift called for even by Gorbachëv.[35] Investment in the oil and gas industry grew from 14 percent of total industrial investment in 1975 to 22 percent in 1984.[36] According to the 12th FYP, investment in this sector is to be 47 percent greater in 1986–90 than in 1981–85. Although investment in machine-building is slated to increase 80 percent over the same period,[37] one has little confidence in Soviet achievement of this goal, given the problems noted above.

In addition, the drive to increase production of machinery is currently affected by yet another in a long line of Soviet economic campaigns. This is the ill-conceived stress on robotics. Production of robots in the USSR is growing at an accelerating pace—from 1,400 units in 1980 to 15,000 units in 1985.[38] However, neither the organization of production in machine-building nor the productive or human infrastructure is prepared to adapt to this new technology; the reliability and quality of the new machinery is inferior; and neither its repair nor servicing has been organized. Hence, application of robots is ineffective and has become a burden for machine-building enterprises. Reportedly, more than 90 percent of the robots put into production have freed one man or less per work shift. The maximum annual savings achieved through the use of any single robot is less than 4,000 rubles, while the expenditures related to its use comprise approximately 40,000 to 50,000 rubles, excluding operating costs.[39] The new leadership's campaign to accelerate the production of "revolutionary technology" in machine-building has resulted in the diversion of enormous resources without regard to economic and technologically rational proportions between the traditional and radically new technology. Soviet machine-building is simply not yet prepared for "robotization." The history of the Soviet economy has many similar instances of impulsive injections of massive investment in a given sector without the appropriate preparation of the infrastructure and allied sectors. The consequences of such imbalanced investment are always onerous (one need only cite the example of Khrushchev's "big chemistry") and will make their adverse impact felt upon all spheres of the economy for a long time to come. Apparently, the current Soviet leadership has not learned the lessons of the past.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that reconstruction is making little headway. Many industrial sectors still lack plans for reconstruction. Even the modest goals set out in the annual economic plan for

[34]See V. Fal'tsman and A. Ozhegov, "Writing-Off of Capital Funds: Investment Possibilities and Limitations," *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 6, 1983, p. 65. These specialists of the Central Economic-Mathematical Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences argue that there is so little room for maneuver in the production of machinery and equipment that few changes can take place in less than seven years from the date of their initiation.

[35]"A Fundamental Question . . . ," loc cit.

[36]*Narkhoz 1984*, p. 381.

[37]Ryzhkov's report, loc. cit.

[38]*Narkhoz 1984*, p. 179.

[39]See L. Volchkevich, "Robots of Today and Tomorrow," *Izvestiya* (Moscow), June 3, 1985.

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1985 were not attained, for example, in the oil-refining, coal, steel, machine-building, paper, and food industries.[40]

Sharp reduction in the introduction of new productive capacities, a shift of emphasis to the modernization of existing capacities, a jump in depreciation rates for outdated fixed capital—all of these have been written into the 12th Five-Year Plan. They connote a radical change in the economic proportions and balances that have developed over the course of half a century. Over this period, resources have been directed primarily at expanding fixed capital, at the expense of replacing it. This distortion of economically justifiable proportions in the creation of fixed capital, manifested in an artificial increase in net investment, has made it possible to sustain high tempos of growth. But the price has been the accumulation of worn-out machinery and old industrial plants. To overcome the inertia of this entire process would require a temporary, but abrupt reduction in production and in national income. Past Soviet leaders have never been willing to accept such a decrease in national income. One can question whether Gorbachëv is ready to pay this price to redeem the economic sins of his predecessors.

Obstacles to Management Reform

The steps to be taken in an effort to improve economic management represent the murkiest aspects of Gorbachëv's report to the 27th Party Congress and the 12th Five-Year Plan itself. The prospects for these measures are equally murky.

The objective of centralization is reflected in the creation of super-centralized administrative units in Moscow—either through the replacement of existing ministries (in the case of the State Agro-Industrial Committee–Gosagroprom) or the imposition of a higher coordinating body above existing ministries (in the case of the Office of Machine-Building). Just how functions will be shared among Gosplan, the State Committee on Science and Technology, the State Construction Committee, the State Committee for Material and Technical Supply, the ministries, and the new administrative units (not to mention the production-branch departments of the Central Committee) is probably not even clear to Gorbachëv himself at this point. More important, it strains credibility to think that the Soviet establishment really expects these current exercises in combining and splitting administrative units to have any more beneficial effect upon economic performance than similar measures did under Khrushchev.

How do things stand with *khozraschët*? This effort to establish full cost-accounting for Soviet managers—very close in concept to commercial accounting of firms operating in a market economy—runs athwart a fundamental systemic problem: pricing. All distribution and allocation rests upon prices; all plan indices for assessing the economy are derived from prices; and all enterprise results and bonuses are calculated using prices. But the existing system of price-setting brings the commercial interests of individual enterprises into fundamental conflict with national economic objectives. Both Gorbachëv and Ryzhkov spoke at the 27th Congress about the need to improve price-setting. But Soviet leaders have been discussing this matter since the first five-year plan. The issue became particularly salient in the 1960's, when it stood at the very center of discussion on the abortive economic reform.

Problems with Prices

Have matters improved in the last two decades? Prices still are highly artificial and far removed from economic realities, torn between the Marxian labor theory of value and Western concepts of marginal utility. Food and housing are highly subsidized and available at unrealistically low prices. At the same time, Soviet industrial enterprises charge more than they should for products. One account describes the "round-about" methods that enterprises employ to this end:

They overstate the manufacturing cost of non-comparable production . . . by ascribing to this disproportionately large volumes of overhead costs. After making symbolic changes in the consumption characteristics [of a product], they obtain a new designation for the old product and formally, legally make a significant increase in its prices . . . . The jacking-up of wholesale prices, which provides the employees of enterprises with a "soft life," encourages the inflation of overhead costs, the wasteful expenditure of raw materials and resources, retards the growth in labor productivity—in a word, undermines the fundamental principles of khozraschët.[41]

A particularly great opportunity for unjustified price increases occurs in the production of new non-stan-

[40]A. Stepun and V. Balakin, "Factors for Increasing the Effectiveness of Capital Construction," *Planovoye Khozyaystvo,* No. 12, 1985, p. 23.

[41]A. Malafeyev, "Steps and Interconnections of Economic Theory and Economic Practice," *Ekonomicheskiye Nauki* (Moscow), No. 12, 1984, p. 6.

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dardized and custom machinery (i.e., individual units and small series). Such items are not included in the official price lists approved by the State Price Committee, but are worked out in agreements between producer and customer. (The stress on cost savings in reconstruction projects reduces opportunities for manufacturers to take much advantage of this mechanism in such projects.)

The bargaining begins with the list price of a similar item, which is then adjusted to reflect the estimated return from utilization of the new, modified machine. However, a selective study by the State Price Committee found that this economic return is overstated by 30 to 50 percent, sometimes several hundred percent.[42] So far, no effective limits on pricing for equipment have been established—both because of methodological difficulties and because such limits would deprive machinery manufacturing plants of important material incentives. Indeed, machine-building enterprises have since received the right—on an experimental basis—to tack on a 30 percent price premium for machines deemed to be "highly effective."[43] The vagueness of definition and poor techniques for assessing effectiveness of new technology provided yet another opening for enterprises to raise prices.

Uncontrolled inflation is as pernicious for a planned economy as for a market economy. Yet, the Soviet system is so constructed that no one has a vested interest in reducing prices on industrial production—not the producer, not the consumer, not even the Ministry of Finance. G. Kulagin, director of a large machine-building plant, explains the situation:

[42]Lira Rozenova, "Price and Efficiency in Machine-Building Production," *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 2, 1984, p. 30.

[43]M. Yartsev, "The Price of the Project," *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya* (Moscow), Apr. 18, 1984, p 2.

The System—at What Price?

In a command economy of the Soviet type, manipulation of prices is theoretically one of the most important levers permitting the state to influence the tempo and course of economic development, to affect the structural movements of the economy. Unfortunately, traditional Soviet price-setting methods are particularly ill-designed for an era of intensification.

Price-setting in the USSR derives from Marx's labor theory of value, with prices determined on the basis of labor expenditures (direct and indirect) going into a given product rather than from some calculation of its quality and utility. It makes badly operating enterprises look good, and it justifies excessive expenditure of resources. Such an approach acts as a barrier to technological progress. At present, there is no suitable mechanism for measuring the relative utility of various types of machinery serving the same consumption purpose. It is obvious that to change over to a path of raising productivity and conserving resources, it is necessary to reject this principle of price-setting and to make utility the first criterion in determining prices.

Here we find a collision between ideological orthodoxy and the demands of economic practice. "Practice" demands, above all, calculation of consumption value. But Soviet economists, for ideological reasons, cannot admit that the labor theory of value has failed to work, or concede the viability of the concept of "marginal utility." Instead, they must resort to convoluted concepts such as "social utility." Thus, Soviet scholar Stanislav Shatalin writes that the law of costs, as the basis for pricing, is giving way to "the law of setting prices on the basis of social utility."*

Recognition that price is a function of utility, not just of the expenditure of labor, implies repudiation of Marx's labor theory of value, something that party ideologists can hardly accept: if the labor theory of value is undermined, what then remains of Marxism in general? Yet, more pragmatically-minded members of the Soviet elite are pressuring theoreticians to straighten out the pricing problem and get on with the practical task of accelerating technological progress. Thus Professor Yuriy Borozdin argues in a lead editorial in *Pravda* of Dec. 6, 1985, that one must "reject the approach: the higher the expenditures, the greater the price, and switch over to the demand: the greater the effect/utility, the higher the price."

Soviet economists today continue to seek an unrealizable compromise—one that simultaneously takes into account both costs calculated in terms of labor value, and real marginal utility. The resulting dilemmas are unresolvable. If the price is based not only upon expenditures but also upon the consumer value of the product, what is one to do when quality/utility increases at the same time that expenditures decline, or vice versa?

At a round-table discussion of *khozraschët*, published in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of May 20, 1985, noted Soviet price specialist Pavel Bunich and Oleg Yun', deputy chief of the section for improving planning and economic stimulation at Gosplan, acknowledged that price-setting is "a maze that one best not get into."

The sheer volume of work facing the State Price Committee is staggering. Every year it receives, reviews, and confirms more than 200,000 production prices on new items. (This excludes a whole plethora of ad hoc prices that do not even pass under its scrutiny.) Every hour, the committee must review 86 prices; every two minutes it must set the price on three items. Hence only spot checking is possible.

Funktsionirovaniye ekonomiki razvitogo sotsializma (Functioning of the Economy of Developed Socialism), Moscow, Izdatel'stvo MGU, 1982, pp. 64, 82.

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One of the serial machines that we had successfully and quickly put into operation began, with time, to produce an indecently large profit. Because the surplus profit was turned over to the budget and the growth of the mass of profit had no effect upon the growth of our incentive funds, we ourselves proposed to reduce the price of this machine. The ministry was not easy to convince, but in the end agreed. The State Committee on Prices also gave its assent. Oddly enough, it was the Ministry of Finance that objected, and indeed in the most categorical fashion. At first, we could not understand this paradox: it seemed to us that the financial administration, more than any one else, should be interested in a price reduction. But then everything became clear: by taking away [the enterprises'] surplus profit as a free surplus, the Ministry of Finance easily and simply accumulates this in the budget as income. Hence a reduction in price would cut this inflow into the budget.[44]

For its part, the State Price Committee can do very little to correct the situation. Most prices pass through the committee's bureaucracy without effective control, with enterprises and ministries taking advantage of competition-free conditions to overstate their results and thereby reap excessive profits.

The inflation present in Soviet industrial pricing is reflected right up to the macroeconomic level of national indicators of economic performance. Recent articles in the Soviet press criticizing official statistics evidence a growing top-level awareness that things are actually a good deal worse than the data from the Central Statistical Administration suggest, and unhappiness with the imperfect data that everyone in the system must use. In *Pravda* of December 30, 1985, economic observer Vasiliy Selyunin and economist Grigoriy Khanin subjected Soviet statistics to a scathing criticism, asserting that data on production (allegedly given in comparable prices) actually contain "a hidden rise in prices on machinery and construction products that is not officially recognized." Another prominent Soviet economist, Solomon Kheinman, wrote: "There is an outright falsehood to be found in economic practice—the selection of indices that knowingly inflate the volume of production."[45] Analysis of statistical data on the production of machinery and equipment in physical, rather than price, terms confirms this view.[46] It is even conceivable that the Soviet economy has been experiencing an absolute decline in industrial production since the late 1970's.

The implications of this dysfunctional price system for the orderly management of the economy from the center, let alone for the development of rational bases for individual enterprise decision-making, are staggering. Attempts to reform this system by formulating prices that can make *khozraschët* feasible—so that the interests of both the state and the enterprise are satisfied—while preserving the command economy are doomed. Transition to a pricing system based upon the concept of marginal utility is tantamount to transition to a market economy. This is the fundamental and unresolvable contradiction of the Soviet economy.

Conclusion

We have examined several intrinsic problems of the Soviet economy. Without a fundamental shift in the system's priorities from political to economic considerations, these problems will not be solved, and Gorbachëv's economic programs as outlined in the 12th Five-Year Plan and various major addresses will not be realized. It is possible that Gorbachëv, once he has consolidated his power, will emerge as a great reformer, but his steps so far have been tentative and incomplete. In pondering the challenge of reform, the Soviet leader would do well to recall the advice of Winston Churchill regarding Khrushchev's bid to reform Soviet politics after the 20th CPSU Congress of 1956: one cannot take two jumps to get across a precipice.

[44]G. Kulagin, "Nomenklatura, Price, Profit," *EKO*, No. 11, 1985, pp. 94–95.

[45]See *EKO*, No. 11, 1985, p. 39. There is sufficient concern over the problem so that the chairman of the economic department of the Moscow Police School, K. Ulybin, recently proposed to treat the raising of prices as "economic sabotage and to punish it accordingly." See his article, "The Deficit and the Mutual Action of Partners," *EKO*, No. 12, 1984, p. 26.

It is perhaps significant that in mid-1985, Lev Volodarskiy, head of the Central Statistical Administration for two decades, was relieved of his responsibilities.

[46]See *Narkhoz 1984*, pp. 175–77, 179–81, 183, 185.

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Imre Nagy & Moscow, 1953-56

Charles Gati

There are several unmarked graves in the northeast corner of one of Budapest's many cemeteries. On appropriate anniversaries a few mourners—family and friends—come by and stand there. Occasionally, they bring flowers. Because the authorities have refused to confirm it, the visitors can only surmise that three of the martyrs of the 1956 Hungarian revolution are buried there.[1] The three are Imre Nagy, prime minister and leader of the revolution, General Pál Maléter, his young and brave defense chief, and Miklós Gimes, one of Nagy's associates and a particularly gifted journalist. They were tried together and executed in 1958.

For Hungarians who remember him or know of him, Nagy was a rare politician. With his large and thick moustache, innocent, round face, inevitable pince-nez, and jovial demeanor, he looked, and was, straightforward and trustworthy. Though only 60 years old in 1956, his associates affectionately referred to him as *az öreg,* the old man, or as *Imre bácsi,* Uncle Imre. For that group of young anti-Stalinist, reform-minded Communists who surrounded him for a few short years before 1956—writers, and journalists, and other political and intellectual hangers-on—Nagy was both a genuine father figure and the last hope for socialism with a human face. But during the revolution itself, when suddenly everything seemed possible, he became the last hope for freedom and independence for all Hungarians. Before it was all over, he had realized their dream by withdrawing Hungary from the Warsaw Pact and reconstituting the postwar, multiparty coalition government of 1944–47.

Of course, his associates helped. The most astute anti-Stalinists from his original entourage—Géza Losonczy, Ferenc Donáth, and Miklós Vásárhelyi—eventually opened his eyes to the nature and scope of the revolution under way. Zoltán Tildy, the veteran leader of the Smallholders' Party and postwar president, emerged from eight years of house arrest to become his calm, de facto deputy. But Imre Nagy was both the leader and the symbol of the 1956 Hungarian revolution. And when he died for it in 1958, he did so without denying what he had done and without recanting what he had stood for.[2] A genuine hero, he belongs on the pedestal where his compatriots have put him.

Yet it is one of the paradoxes of political life in Eastern Europe that, until the last days of this short-lived revolution, Nagy was also the man Moscow counted on, and could count on, to preserve its interests in Hungary. Indeed, from the time of the first demonstration, on October 23, until October 31, Nagy could only envisage a Hungarian future based on Soviet tutelage. At first, acting with Soviet concurrence, he sought to make order by promising "reforms," assuming that such a promise would end the uprising. He also assumed that a communist party, attuned to his interpretation of what had to be done,

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[1]Béla Lipták, "Searching for the Grave of Imre Nagy," *The Wall Street Journal* (New York) Oct. 9, 1985.

[2]Even the Hungarian government's *White Book*, which quotes most tendentiously from Nagy's testimony during the trial, suggests his stubborn determination. See *Nagy Imre és büntársai ellenforradalmi összeesküvése* (The Counterrevolutionary Conspiracy of Imre Nagy and His Accomplices), Budapest, n.p., n.d. [1958]. Of Nagy's "accomplices" who received prison sentences and were released in the early 1960's, Ferenc Donáth and Miklós Vásárhelyi—whom I was able to interview on several occasions—live in Budapest, and Sándor Kopácsi lives in Toronto. Unfortunately, Kopácsi's published recollections are neither particularly revealing nor always factually accurate. See Sándor Kopácsi, *Az 1956-os magyar forradalom és a Nagy Imre per* (The Hungarian Revolution and the Imre Nagy Trial), New Brunswick, NJ, Magyar Öregdiák Szövetség/Bessenyei György Kör, 1980.

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would implement his reformist ideas and policies. That is why so much of what he did at that time turned out to be too little and too late.

Nagy's first turning point came on October 28 when he reached the conclusion that the *party* too had to be changed. He had come to understand—and Moscow agreed—that the time for reform had passed, and hence his—and Moscow's—all but impossible historic mission was to reconcile Soviet power-political interests with those of a new Hungarian political order. He consulted with Anastas Mikoyan and Mikhail Suslov, the two Soviet Politburo emissaries who were in Budapest, and with Yuriy Andropov, the Soviet ambassador to Hungary, to gain their approval for the transfer of the functions of the party's hapless Central Committee to a new, centrist, six-member Presidium. So anxious was Nagy not to circumvent Moscow that he called the Kremlin from Andropov's office that morning to obtain confirmation of the authorization he had just received from the Soviet representatives in Budapest. Whether he spoke with Nikita Khrushchev himself or someone else is not known, but he was authorized to make the change. Two days later, on October 30, when the new party leadership proved unable to impose order, Nagy was ready to meet one of the revolution's major demands by establishing a pluralistic political system. Before making his decision, however, he once again asked for—and received—Mikoyan's approval for the creation of a genuine, four-party coalition government. In short, during the first week of the revolution, Nagy knew or thought he knew what the Soviet Union wanted him to do "to save the cause of socialism" in Hungary, and he acted accordingly.

Only his second turning point, which came on November 1, signified a parting of the ways between Nagy and Moscow. Soviet troops having reentered Hungary the night before, Nagy realized that the Kremlin was no longer interested in finding a political solution under his leadership to the Hungarian crisis. He felt betrayed. In vain had he consulted with the Kremlin; in vain had he gained Soviet approval for every major measure he had adopted between October 23 and October 31. This was the moment, then, when Nagy, a Moscow loyalist all his life, became a Hungarian revolutionary. On November 1, without Soviet concurrence, his government declared Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and the country's neutrality. On November 4, when its troops reached the capital, the Soviet Union overthrew Nagy's government and crushed the revolution.

My purpose here is neither to describe the revolution nor to judge Nagy's performance. My interest is in drawing attention to the apparent flexibility, confusion, and duplicity in Soviet conduct and to the crucial impact of Kremlin infighting on Hungarian politics before and during the revolution.

From Moscow to Moscow

Except for a brief absence from late 1949 to early 1951, Imre Nagy was a full member of the Hungarian communist party's Politburo from 1944 to 1953. Having spent almost 15 years in the Soviet Union as the Hungarian party's expert on agriculture, he returned from Moscow to play a not insignificant role in the execution of the 1945 land reform. In 1945–46, he served as minister of internal affairs for a few months; but when he proved too gentle in that post, he was asked to relinquish it and take up another. He is known to have expressed reservations about the scope and tempo of the changes in agriculture in the winter of 1947–48, and about the collectivization campaign in 1949, but then—as minister of crop collection for a few months—he was put in charge of implementing the very policies he had questioned. In 1952, he became a deputy premier with responsibility for agriculture. During these years, however, he was never an influential decision-maker.

Although Nagy publicly supported whatever the Hungarian communist party decided to do, and although he exercised "self-criticism" whenever the Politburo majority considered his views erroneous, his colleagues disliked him from the beginning, and both Secretary General Mátyás Rákosi and his deputy Ernő Gerő were said to have hated him.[3] If so, and given Rákosi's extensive powers, how could Nagy have kept his seat on the Politburo all those years and why was László Rajk rather than the occasionally "difficult" Nagy chosen to be the "leader" of a "Titoist conspiracy" in 1949 and sentenced to death? The only reasonable answer, confirmed by the then pro-Rákosi acolyte Zoltán Vas, is that Nagy was protected by the Kremlin. It is probable that Georgiy Malenkov and Lavrentiy Beria in particular considered Nagy a reliable and loyal party man. What is certain is that Nagy had early and important supporters in Moscow, perhaps Stalin

[3]Information in this paragraph is drawn from the unpublished version of Zoltán Vas's extraordinary, 500,000-word memoirs. Vas was Rákosi's close associate for over 30 years and frequently a member of the Hungarian party's Politburo from 1945 to 1952. Stalin's death frustrated Rákosi's plan to accuse Vas of being the head of a "Zionist conspiracy" in 1953. For the heavily censored version of Vas's memoirs, see *Viszontagságos életem* (My Vicissitudinous Life), Budapest, Magvetö, 1980, and *Akkori önmagunkról: Önéletirás II* (About Our Previous Selves: Memoirs II), Budapest, Magvetö, 1982.

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himself, who imposed Nagy on Rákosi at the end of 1944. At that time Rákosi, while still in Moscow, had informed Vas (who had already reached southern Hungary with the Red Army) that the "Christian" Nagy and not the "Jewish" Vas was to be the fifth highest-ranking member of the Politburo after the (Jewish) foursome of Rákosi, Gerő, Mihály Farkas, and József Révai. Having thus been installed by Moscow, Nagy survived—literally—through the dark years of Hungarian Stalinism because somebody somewhere in the Kremlin looked after him, and, for this reason, Rákosi did not dare to touch him.

Soviet confidence in Nagy was conclusively demonstrated in 1953, after Stalin's death in March and just before the outbreak of the June 17 riots in East Berlin. On short notice, the Kremlin invited a group of Hungarian leaders to Moscow for a meeting on June 13–14, specifying the precise composition of the Hungarian delegation.[4] The group included Rákosi and Gerő, but not Farkas and Révai—a curious signal. Others who were told to appear were Nagy, then a deputy prime minister, István Dobi, the nonparty figurehead of the Presidential Council, and four younger party leaders (András Hegedüs, Béla Szalai, István Hidas, and Rudolf Földvári). According to Hegedüs, there might have been some tension between the new Soviet leaders and the Hungarians prior to the June meeting, but—even though he was a Politburo member—he did not know what it was about. There was no discussion of differences during the flight from Budapest to Moscow; he was in the dark as to what to expect. Because both he and Nagy were specialists in agriculture, it occurred to him that they might receive some "helpful criticism" from their Soviet comrades about that. If so, Hegedüs says, he looked forward to it. But agriculture was not an important issue on the agenda.

The Soviet delegation included every important member of the post-Stalin CPSU Presidium, as the Politburo was then called: Malenkov, Beria, Khrushchev, Vyacheslav Molotov, Nikolay Bulganin, Anastas Mikoyan, Lazar' Kaganovich, as well as Marshal Klement Voroshilov, the Kremlin's veteran Hungarian expert. In no uncertain terms they let the Hungarians know that the Soviet Union was deeply dissatisfied with Rákosi's leadership. The Hungarian economy was on the verge of collapse. The collectivization campaign had gone too far. The purges had decimated the party. Thus, Rákosi must give up either his position as prime minister or his position as the party's first secretary; he held too much power. Obviously well-informed, Beria even wanted to know why the wife of secret police (ÁVO) chief Gábor Péter and Rákosi's personal secretary was among those recently arrested. In reply, according to Hegedüs, Rákosi mumbled something about Stalin having told him that Péter was a CIA agent. Beria lost his cool: "As an old Bolshevik, you Rákosi must know that we really know how to break someone's back!"

From Nagy's account, it appears that at one point the Soviet leaders called Rákosi aside for what turned into a particularly nasty, personal confrontation. For a start, Beria accused Rákosi of trying to become "the Jewish king of Hungary." Referring to "Turkish sultans, Hapsburg emperors, Tatar kings, and Polish princes" who had all once ruled Hungary, Beria warned: "But, as far as we know, Hungary has never had a Jewish king. Apparently, this is what you have become. Well, you can be sure that we won't allow it."[5] At the same meeting, as related to Nagy by Malenkov, the Soviets asked Rákosi: "'Whom do you recommend as your deputy?' He could name no one. He had objections to everyone whose name was mentioned; he had something against everyone. Everyone was suspect except he alone. This appalled us very much." Nagy was also told by Molotov that Rákosi had "wanted a premier who would have no voice in the making of decisions." Later, at a plenary session, the Soviet leaders "proposed" Nagy's appointment as prime minister and Gerő's and Hegedüs's appointments as Nagy's deputies. There and then, they also changed the composition of the Politburo, from which Farkas and Révai were excluded for reasons neither asked nor given.

Nagy's appointment was all the more significant because it was not yet clear whether he, as prime minister, or Rákosi, as party first secretary, would be number one. In the Soviet Union, the head of the government, Malenkov, was number one. For that reason, according to Hegedüs, Rákosi feared that his demotion was even more serious than it turned out to be. As they left one of the conference rooms in the protocol-conscious Kremlin, Rákosi was politely prompted by Nagy to precede him. But, as Hegedüs was shocked to witness, Rákosi pushed Nagy ahead: "You go, Imre, you're the leader now."

[4]Except for Beria's reference to Rákosi having become "the Jewish king of Hungary" (see fn. 5, below), all quotes in this summary of the June 13–14, 1953, meeting in the Kremlin are drawn from the published accounts of two participants, Imre Nagy and András Hegedüs. See Nagy, *On Communism: In Defense of the New Course*, New York, Praeger, 1957, and Hegedüs, *Élet egy eszme árnyékában* (Life in the Shadow of an Ideal), Vienna, Zoltán Zsille, 1985, esp. pp. 188–97.

[5]Tamás Aczél and Tibor Méray, *The Revolt of the Mind: A Case History of Intellectual Resistance Behind the Iron Curtain*, New York, Praeger, 1959, p. 159.

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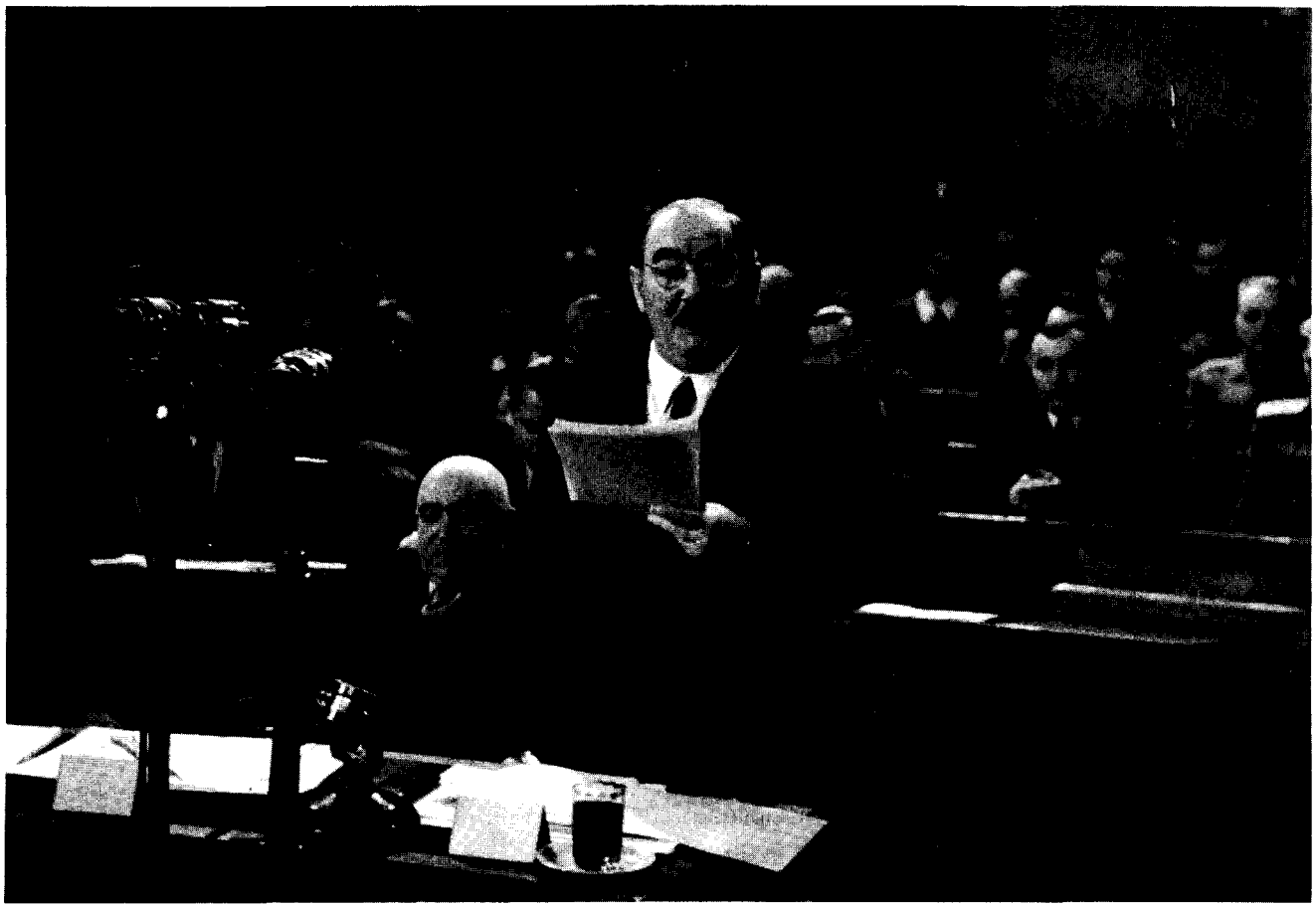

Premier Imre Nagy delivers a speech to the Hungarian Parliament on January 21, 1954; at his side is Hungarian communist party chief Matyas Rákosi.

–EASTFOTO.

The New Course that Nagy was told to pursue as prime minister[6] received only perfunctory support from Rákosi, who was put on the defensive by every new measure announced by Nagy—about agriculture, about the new emphasis on light industry, and about the rehabilitation of political prisoners. After all, he had been in charge when those "mistakes" were made. For almost two years, then, Rákosi kept returning to Moscow for permission to reverse the reformist course—and to oust Nagy. On one such occasion, according to Nagy,[7] Khrushchev said: "Rákosi is responsible for the arrests. Therefore he does not want to release these people. He knows that he is guilty and will compromise himself." On another occasion, Khrushchev complained that "the detainees are being released slowly. This is Rákosi's fault, because he hasn't taken the matter in hand. Rákosi alludes to the fact that his nerves are bad. Nerves don't count." When Rákosi tried to use the news of the ouster of Beria, presumably one of Nagy's supporters, to discredit Nagy, Khrushchev rebuffed the pro-Rákosi forces: "They can't hide behind Beria as Rákosi is trying to do. We were

[6]I make no attempt here to treat the reforms enacted during the New Course and the intellectual ferment of 1953–56. For details, see Nagy, *On Communism* and numerous scholarly and journalistic accounts, including Miklós Molnár and László Nagy, *Imre Nagy: Réformateur ou révolutionnaire?* (Imre Nagy: Reformer or Revolutionary?), Geneva, Droz, 1959; Tibor Méray, *Thirteen Days that Shook the Kremlin: Imre Nagy and the Hungarian Revolution*, New York, Praeger, 1959; and Aczél and Méray, *Revolt of the Mind*. For a comprehensive and elegant scholarly treatment of this subject, see Bennett Kovrig, *Communism in Hungary: From Kun to Kádár*, Stanford, CA, Hoover Institution Press, 1979, pp. 267–98. Two key documents from 1953 surfaced only in 1985 in a Hungarian *samizdat* publication in Budapest called *Hirmondó*. One, translated into English by Bill Lomax, is Nagy's previously suppressed speech to the Hungarian party's Central Committee on June 27, 1953; see "Imre Nagy's Secret Speech," *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* (London), Summer 1985, pp. 3–16. The other is the resolution of the same Central Committee session, passed on June 28, 1953, but withheld from the public; see "The June Resolution," *Irodalmi Ujság* (Paris), Vol. 36, No. 3, 1985, pp. 11–14. Significantly, Nagy's 1953 "secret speech" to the Central Committee indirectly confirms Nagy's and Hegedüs's subsequent accounts of what the Soviet leaders so vividly said during the June 13–14 confrontation in the Kremlin.

[7]All quotes in this paragraph are from Nagy, *On Communism*.

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there, too, when these errors were ascertained, every one of us!" Malenkov echoed that view: "The faults we noted in June are being remedied very slowly. Rákosi has not taken the lead in remedying the faults." Khrushchev also attacked Gerő: "Gerő has no words of self-criticism or feeling of responsibility for the serious mistakes of the economic policy."

As the struggle within the Hungarian party continued, the Kremlin presently appeared to favor Nagy over Rákosi. Nagy appreciated the confidence of "the leading Soviet comrades" in him, their "sincere, plain and sharp criticism, which was given in a true party spirit," "their readiness to offer fraternal help [and] the great trust which they extended toward us."[8] In reality, that "trust" appeared to be limited; after all, both Rákosi and Gerő were allowed to retain their highly important positions despite all that they had done. "I have to keep Rákosi . . . because in Hungary the whole structure will collapse if he goes," Khrushchev argued.[9] Yet, to the extent the Soviet leadership preferred Nagy, it was for good reasons. He had been in Moscow for many years. He was not Jewish. He could speak Russian well. He was a loyal supporter of Soviet policies, under Stalin and now under his successors as well. He had played no role in the Hungarian party purges. By temperament, he was earnest, disciplined, and reliable, even if frequently stubborn. Though an early critic of the tempo of forced collectivization, he never publicly questioned party policy once it was adopted. As the new Soviet leaders were about to introduce their own New Course, Nagy was very much on their wavelength. He was the man they needed.

On the Kremlin's Waiting List

As late as October 1954, Nagy was still riding high; Gerő, after a brief vacation in Moscow, was uncharacteristically supportive of him. But Soviet signals began to change in November. Mihály Farkas, that barometer of Soviet sentiments, was the first to reflect the new line: "There is no New Course, . . . it is rightist to pursue it, . . . the old road must be pursued, only some mistakes to be corrected."[10] In charge of culture and the press at the time, Farkas accordingly dismissed several Nagy supporters from the editorial staff of the party daily *Szabad Nép* on December 16.

Rákosi had just returned from a Soviet vacation, too. In Moscow, he learned of the imminent palace conspiracy against Malenkov, and the corresponding new party line against the New Course and against rightist deviationism. Looking for an opportunity to discredit Nagy, Rákosi began to say—behind closed doors still—that in Hungary, too, rightist deviationism had become the main danger. He said that it was an error to have favored light industry and to have allowed collective farms to disband. By so identifying Nagy's policies with the just-discovered "errors" of the recent past, Rákosi anticipated the charges Khrushchev would make against *his* as yet unnamed opponent (Malenkov) at the end of January 1955.

It was against the background of the ascendancy of this newly formed anti-Malenkov coalition that an urgent invitation was sent to a group of Hungarian leaders to appear in the Kremlin on January 7, 1955. The Hungarian delegation was composed of Nagy, Rákosi, Gerő, Szalai, and Farkas. The Soviet Politburo was represented by Malenkov, Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Molotov, Kaganovich, and Bulganin. This time, Nagy was put on the carpet. Following Soviet custom, the task of attacking him was given to his mentor Malenkov who, with a thick file in front of him, began to quote from Nagy's recent speeches and articles and then accused him of "slander against the party," of contradicting "the Leninist principle of [democratic] centralism," of "underestimating the party's governing role," of minimizing "the class struggle," of "opportunism, chauvinism, and demagogy." Obviously well briefed, Malenkov also cited facts and figures to show how the New Course, for which only Nagy was now said to be responsible, had exacerbated Hungary's economic problems. Malenkov even knew of and complained about a small anti-Soviet demonstration during a Soviet-Hungarian water polo game in Budapest.[11]

It is clear in retrospect that Khrushchev, once one of the strongest supporters of Nagy and the New Course, had turned coat in order to get rid of Malenkov with the help of such Stalinist opponents of the Soviet New Course—and of Malenkov—as Kaganovich and Molotov. (Soon enough, in mid-1957, Malenkov would join Molotov and Kaganovich in an unsuccessful attempt to oust Khrushchev.) At this time, though, they all wanted to discredit Nagy in order to demonstrate the harm Malenkov's policies had supposedly done even outside the Soviet Union. As for Malenkov, he followed the usual Bolshevik formula which required him to save

[8]"Imre Nagy's Secret Speech," loc. cit., p. 5.

[9]As quoted in George Mikes, *The Hungarian Revolution*, London, Deutsch, 1957, p. 61.

[10]Ferenc A. Váli, *Rift and Revolt in Hungary: Nationalism versus Communism*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1961, p. 155.

[11]For a detailed account of this encounter, see Méray, *Thirteen Days*, pp. 22–28. The source for Méray's summary is not indicated, but subsequent public charges against Nagy generally confirm its accuracy.

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Civilians and soldiers in Budapest burn photos of Stalinist communist leader Matyas Rákosi during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

–MAGNUM.

himself by implementing the *anti*-Malenkov position. Malenkov was to purify himself by accepting responsibility for his, and Nagy's, advocacy of the New Course in the Soviet Union and in Hungary, a policy *everyone* in the Politburo had favored. By degrading himself in this fashion, Malenkov was to be demoted but not ousted for the time being. In the summer of 1955, a secret Soviet memorandum, sent to the communist leaders of Eastern Europe, clarified the meaning of and gave the rationale for this Byzantine, Mafia-like affair. Seweryn Bialer, who saw it in Poland at the time, summarized the memorandum in this way: "The policy of Malenkov, aside from the harm which it threatened in Soviet domestic matters, *concealed serious dangers for the countries of the people's democracies and for the relations of the Soviet Union with these countries, an example of which is the situation in Hungary.*"[12]

After Malenkov's demotion in February, Nagy's turn came in early March. His errors? "Undervaluing the leading role of the party," "rightist opportunist deviation...concerning the peasants," revision of "the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat," and more.[13] The only significant difference between Malenkov and Nagy was that Nagy did not exercise self-criticism and did not accept a lesser position in the government. That difference prompted Mikhail Suslov, the Kremlin's new Hungarian specialist, to show up in Budapest to persuade Nagy to follow the "Malenkov formula." Would Comrade Nagy confess his errors? No. Would Comrade Nagy accept a lesser position in the government as Malenkov had? No.[14] In mid-April, Nagy lost all his positions. He remained an ordinary party member until November 1955, when he was expelled from the party he had helped found in 1918. The day it happened, an irate Nagy told Tamás Aczél, a friend: "Look what they've done to me. . . . after so many years as a party militant. . . . These absolute nonentities. . . . But I told them the truth. . . . I told them the truth. . . ."[15]

For now, Rákosi had prevailed. He used the Malenkov affair as he had not been able to use the Beria affair, to take revenge for the humiliation he had suffered. For during the Beria affair, Khrushchev and Malenkov had still been allies, and hence there was no need for Khrushchev to turn against Nagy and the New Course. During the Malenkov affair, however, Khrushchev needed the Stalinists to defeat Malenkov, and hence the New Course had to be reversed. Considerations of power preceded considerations of principle, and Nagy became the unwitting victim of a very complex Kremlin free-for-all as well as of Rákosi's pernicious maneuverings.

Presently, Nagy became a pensioner. He took long walks, held extensive talks with his growing number of admirers, and enjoyed his sudden, immense popularity. He also wrote a series of political essays and studies (which would be published in the West in 1957 under the title *On Communism*). In these studies he defended his Marxist-Leninist positions, angrily denounced Rákosi and his supporters, and respectfully praised the post-Stalin Soviet leaders' views and policies. Nagy took courage from the fact that Moscow apparently had not authorized his arrest; that in mid-1955 the Soviet Union made up with Tito's Yugoslavia, a leader and a country he admired; that the Austrian State Treaty, the Geneva Summit, and especially the

[12]Seweryn Bialer, "The Three Schools of Kremlin Policy," *The New Leader* (Washington, DC), July 29, 1957, p. 10. Emphasis added.
[13]*Szabad Nép* (Budapest), Mar. 9, 1955.
[14]Aczél and Méray, *Revolt of the Mind*, p. 324.
[15]Quoted in Méray, *Thirteen Days*, p. 41.

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Imre Nagy, prior to his reemergence as Hungarian leader.

–MAGNUM.

20th CPSU Congress all pointed to change for the better, including his own vindication and rehabilitation. He also took courage from the outpouring of support he received from intellectuals, mainly disillusioned Communist writers and journalists, whose "revolt of the mind" was gaining new adherents and new momentum every day.

By the summer of 1956, with the main act of the Malenkov drama and the 20th Congress behind them, and with signs of high elite tension and persistent instability in Hungary, the Soviet leaders began to take a second look at Rákosi. They were under tremendous pressure by their new friend Tito to oust him. Tito had taken the unusual and undiplomatic step of publicly and vehemently denouncing Rákosi and his cohorts. "These men," said Tito, "have their hands soaked in blood, have staged trials, given false information, sentenced innocent men to death. They have had Yugoslavia mixed up in all these trials, as in the case of the Rajk trial, and they now find it difficult to admit before their own people their mistakes."[16] Tito had long despised Rákosi and favored Nagy; already in 1955 and especially in 1956, contacts were made between Yugoslavia and some of Nagy's supporters. In fact, Nagy managed to send several of his essays and at least one personal letter to Tito via the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest.[17]

At long last, on July 17, 1956, Mikoyan—on his way to Belgrade and as a present to Tito—stopped in Budapest to tell the Hungarian Politburo that Rákosi must go. This "wise leader" of Hungary, as he was officially called in Stalin's time, or the "bald murderer" as he was called by many, did not want to believe that Mikoyan was speaking for the Soviet leaders.[18] Only after Khrushchev confirmed the bad news on the telephone did he resign, admitting a few of his errors and complaining of poor health. Then he left for the Soviet Union. His replacement was neither Imre Nagy nor the centrist János Kádár, but Ernő Gerő. Moscow still must have believed that order and stability could be restored by the Hungarian party following more or less the same policies Rákosi had pursued—but without Rákosi himself.[19]

Why not Nagy? Were not the Russians having second thoughts about him, too? The first piece of evidence suggesting that they were came from a Hungarian sculptor, Zsigmond Strobl Kisfaludi, who was in Moscow at the beginning of the summer of 1956. He was commissioned to make a bust of Marshal Voroshilov. After a few drinks, Voroshilov was reported to have told the maestro: "Things do not go well in your country. . . . Rákosi? A vulgar blackguard. . . . And Gerő is just as worthless. . . . There is only one honest man in the whole party leadership [sic]. He is Imre Nagy."[20] Then there were other signs, too. Yuriy Andropov, the new Soviet ambassador, kept inviting Nagy, just a pensioner, to his residence on Bajza Street for long and apparently pleasant discussions. Suslov called on him in mid-June, again offering the prime ministership if Nagy would only exercise self-criticism.[21] Returning

[16]*Documents on International Affairs, 1955,* London, Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 271.

[17]Information by Miklós Vásárhelyi.

[18]Váli, *Rift and Revolt,* pp. 234–35.

[19]There are contradictory reports on who was the Kremlin's first choice at this time. On the one hand, Tito reported in his famous Pula speech of November 11, 1956, that the Soviet leaders had "made it a condition [of Rákosi's removal] that Rákosi would go only if Gerő remained." (See Paul E. Zinner, Ed., *National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe,* New York, Columbia University Press, 1957, p. 524.) On the other hand, András Hegedüs reports that when Mikoyan landed in Budapest, he and Rákosi received him at the airport. In the car, on their way to a guesthouse, Mikoyan suddenly turned to Rákosi: "The Party Presidium [Politburo] thinks that in the given situation, claiming ill health, you must resign, Comrade Rákosi. Comrade Hegedüs must take over the position of the First Secretary." Hegedüs, who was cognizant of his modest talents, reports that he declined the appointment. See Hegedüs, op. cit., pp. 242–45.

[20]Quoted in Méray, *Thirteen Days,* p. 47.

[21]Hegedüs, op. cit., pp. 240–41.

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from Belgrade, Mikoyan made another brief stopover in Budapest on July 21 to see Nagy and to assure him that it was Rákosi and not the Kremlin that had ordered his expulsion from the party. Alarmed by growing tension in Hungary, Mikoyan also asked for Nagy's help to find a way out.[22]

Thus, with Tito as a key player now and Nagy as Tito's obvious choice, the Russians were increasingly interested in Nagy and the authority he could command. But they were hesitant. On the one hand, Nagy was stubborn; he still refused to exercise self-criticism and thus follow the "Malenkov formula." On the other hand, with Malenkov on the sidelines, Nagy no longer had to be a scapegoat for Malenkov or his policies. Therefore, what began to matter to the Kremlin *now* was that Nagy, though a nonparty pensioner, remained loyal to the Soviet Union and to the party, and that he was needed. Hungary was bursting at the seams. As the day of reckoning, October 23, 1956, approached, then, Nagy—his authority to be used and his loyalty to be manipulated—was available, and he seemed to be once again at or near the top of the Kremlin's waiting list.

Nagy was finally readmitted to the party on October 13, but not before Gerő and his current deputy, János Kádár, had held further and no doubt anxious consultations with Mikoyan and Suslov, and Khrushchev had arranged for Gerő to meet "accidentally" with Tito in the Crimea.[23] There, on the condition that Nagy would be promptly rehabilitated and as a gesture of goodwill toward Khrushchev, Tito agreed to receive Gerő in Belgrade the following week. Gerő had no time to waste. In Budapest, before leaving for Belgrade to formally apologize to Tito for the Hungarian party's past behavior,[24] Gerő worked out a compromise that called for Nagy's readmission to the party without preconditions. Thus, Nagy did not have to recant and the party did not have to admit its error for having ousted him in the first place. To his associates' dismay, Nagy accepted the formula. However much he despised Gerő, it was more important for Nagy to demonstrate that he was a disciplined communist. Above all, he seemed to appreciate the Soviet comrades' efforts on his behalf; he was grateful to them for letting him repair to the party he loved, the party that had endowed his life with meaning, significance, and a mission for almost 40 years.

[22]Méray, *Thirteen Days*, p. 55. Méray reports that at this meeting "Mikoyan overflowed with amiability."

[23]Veljko Mićunović, *Moscow Diary*, Garden City, NY, Doubleday and Co., 1980, pp. 116–17.

[24]Hegedüs, op. cit., pp. 249–50.

Revolution or New Course?

On October 23, when peaceful demonstrations began in support of the dramatic changes then taking place in Poland—including the elevation of Władysław Gomułka to his old position as first secretary of the Polish party—Nagy and his supporters met at Géza Losonczy's apartment to assess the situation.[25] They perhaps on his associates too, to rejoin the regime and thereby help reestablish a measure of stability in the country. So they held a caucus and talked politics. They seemed to agree that Nagy should accept his old position of prime minister only if his worst Stalinist enemies were ousted and his adherents offered responsible assignments. They thought that Kádár, who never belonged to Nagy's group, should be the party's first secretary and that Imre Mező and József Köböl, who shared some of Nagy's views, should be Kádár's deputies. Nagy and several of his closest associates—Losonczy, Ferenc Donáth, Sándor Haraszti, and Zoltán Szántó—were regarded as strong candidates for the Politburo. They also agreed on a dozen or so people, mainly writers and journalists, whom Nagy would recommend for Central Committee membership.

By nighttime, with Stalin's large statue toppled and the radio building under siege, the Hungarian revolution was under way.[26] The army, instead of following orders and attacking the crowds, handed over its weapons to the insurgents. At party headquarters, Gerő, having just returned from Belgrade, was preparing to address the country on the radio. He was constantly on the telephone with the Kremlin and with Soviet ambassador Andropov. When Nagy was brought in, Gerő offered him the prime ministership. Nagy accepted the offer. Hegedüs, the current occupant, readily agreed to be demoted; he stayed on as Nagy's deputy. Hegedüs would later recall, "We all understood that. . . there was no other political solution but Imre Nagy's entry into the government."[27] Tired and confused, Nagy asked for no further personnel changes as yet. Generally, he let Gerő take the lead.

[25]For a small segment of Losonczy's diary and other testimony about this meeting, see *Nagy Imre és büntársai ellenforradalmi összeesküvése*, loc. cit., pp. 34–36. One of the participants also gave me a detailed description of what happened at Losonczy's apartment.

[26]This section deals only with the Soviet Union's relationship with Nagy and with other events of "high politics" that are essential to an understanding of that relationship. For comprehensive accounts of the revolution itself, see the sources already cited, esp. in fn. 6.

[27]Hegedüs, op. cit., p. 259.

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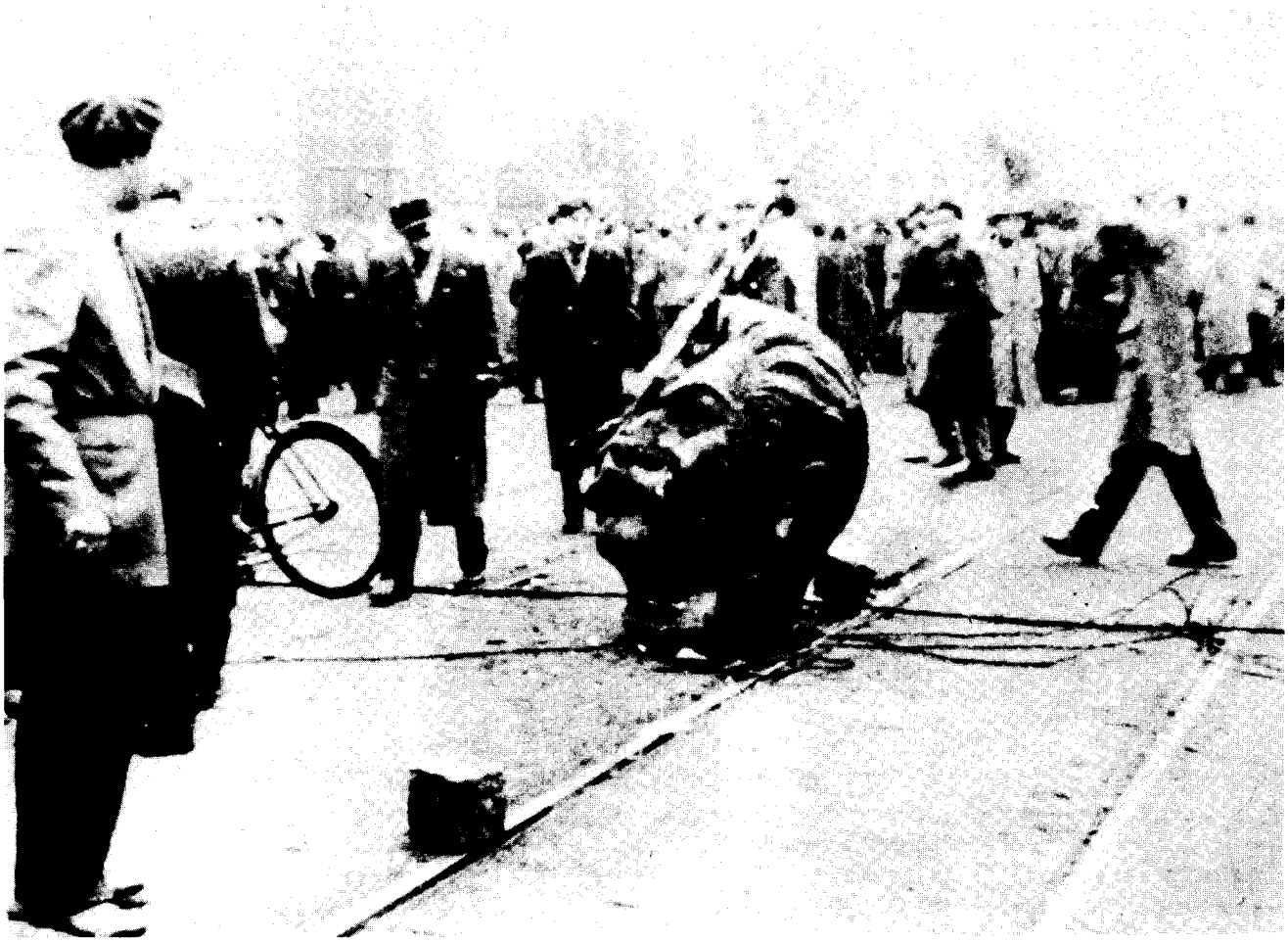

The head from a statue of Stalin dragged through the streets of Budapest after being cut off on the night of October 25, 1956.

–Pictorial Parade.

(Gerő had already obtained Khrushchev's approval for Nagy's appointment.)[28]

During its almost continuous series of meetings that had begun at midnight, the Central Committee sought to appease the insurgents and disarm the political opposition by removing a few of the worst Stalinist diehards from the Politburo and replacing them with Nagy, two of the less militant Nagy supporters (Köböl and Szántó) and two centrists close to Kádár (Gyula Kállai and Sándor Gáspár). Of Nagy's best friends, Losonczy was named only an alternate member of the Politburo and Donáth one of the party's secretaries under Gerő and Kádár.

Having been co-opted to the leadership in their absence, Losonczy and Donáth refused to take up their assignments.[29] They thought the changes were cosmetic, and they found Nagy aloof and indeed unwilling to implement the understanding about personnel that they had reached at Losonczy's apartment less than 24 hours earlier. They were dismayed to find that Nagy lacked any understanding of—any "feel" for—what was happening outside party headquarters. They failed to convince Nagy that he must immediately turn against Gerő. They were upset that while he had reproached Gerő for the past—for having brought about this situation—he had not taken issue with him about what to do next. As they saw it, Nagy was not responding to the revolution in the streets but was merely reflecting the atmosphere at party headquarters.

[28]Ibid., p. 260.

[29]The following interpretation of Nagy's early behavior is based on information derived from Méray, *Thirteen Days*, p. 88ff.; Hegedüs, op. cit., pp. 260–77; and information by György Heltai, Zoltán Vas, and Miklós Vásárhelyi, all associates of Nagy. For a fine description and analysis of what happened at party headquarters and of "high politics" during the revolution, see also Váli, *Rift and Revolt*, pp. 280–305.

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Specifically, how could Nagy have agreed to declare martial law? How could he have failed to object to the overnight announcement, made on behalf of the Council of Ministers of which he was the designated head, that demanded that all "fascist, reactionary elements" stop their "counterrevolutionary activities"? Worse, why was Nagy silent when Gerő, in consultation with Andropov, arranged on the night of October 23 for Soviet troops stationed in the countryside to leave their barracks and offer "fraternal assistance"? As Hegedüs confirms too,[30] Nagy was passive or agnostic, if not agreeable, on the key issues of the day, including that of requesting Soviet aid.

Nagy's agnosticism on calling for Soviet help became particularly clear when Gerő and Andropov asked Nagy to sign the formal request for it. Having been silent when the issue was discussed, Nagy simply avoided them; he walked away without saying yes or no. In the end, with Andropov still insisting on having something in writing, *former* Prime Minister Hegedüs signed the document. He did so on October 26, three days after Soviet troops had been called in and hence when he was no longer the country's prime minister. The letter was predated to make it appear that it had been signed sometime on October 23, when *formally* Hegedüs was probably still the prime minister and Nagy the prime minister–designate. Of course, the reason why Gerő and Andropov did not ask Hegedüs to sign it already on October 23 was because at that time they still tried to get Nagy's signature in order to compromise him.

Nagy failed to assert himself as well on another, potentially crucial, issue. On October 25 at a Central Committee session, Nagy's friend Ferenc Donáth introduced a motion. Against the background of Gerő's provocative speech on the radio 36 hours before, Donáth's moderate proposal was intended to calm the country's angry, explosive mood. In his motion, Donáth urged the party to express its understanding of the reasons for the people's fury and to identify itself with some of the popular demands. The motion was intentionally somewhat vague, but its message was quite positive and its tone conciliatory if not soothing. If passed *at this early date* and subsequently amplified, it might well have reduced the chances for the continuation of the violent confrontation under way. Incredibly, only Losonczy and Márton Horváth, the latter a political chameleon, supported Donáth's motion. When Nagy, their hero, voted against it, Donáth and Losonczy left party headquarters for home. (They returned four days later.)

[30]Hegedüs, op. cit., pp. 260–77.

With both Mikoyan and Suslov at party headquarters from October 24 to 26, Nagy thus reverted to his 1953 political program and mentality. The fighting spirit of Imre Nagy of 1955 or early 1956 was not in evidence. Having declared martial law, Nagy went on to ask the people to trust him and to let him proceed toward the full implementation of the "June way," the 1953 New Course. New Course? Only a devoted party apparatchik could still think in terms of ending the era of the "personality cult," of correcting "past errors," of shifting economic priorities. The "enemy" was misleading the good people of Hungary? The students and workers on the streets, fighting for freedom and independence, were stunned; the party jargon was jarring and the content it conveyed insulting. They no longer thought in terms of the party, its alien jargon and its warring factions. Years of suppressed hostility had suddenly found expression in new expectations and demands, of which one more than any other could be heard time and again: *Ruszkik haza!* (Russians, go home).

It was all very puzzling. While a nonparty, private citizen in 1955–56, Imre Nagy had grown considerably. His studies written at the time had shown his understanding of the growing gap between the party and the people. With insight and compassion, he had warned that if political and economic reforms were denied, the consequences could be catastrophic. He understood well that *tactical* changes, a minor concession here and "one step backward" there, would not be adequate. He demanded that the party adopt a new *strategic* direction that, based on the concept of sovereignty, would lead to equitable relations between the Soviet Union and Hungary. He took the Soviet leaders' declarations about de-Stalinization, especially those made at the 20th Congress, at face value. He had not reached the point of advocating a return to the postwar, multiparty coalition era, but in his scheme of things those who did not belong to the party would still have equal access to the country's resources and a say about the country's orientation. He seemed prepared to go beyond the creation of a mere Popular Front.

Nagy had also understood the meaning of the post-Stalin riots in East Berlin, Plzeň, Prague, and in the Hungarian industrial towns of Csepel, Ózd, and Diósgyőr. He had prophetically warned in 1955, and hence before the 20th CPSU Congress:

The degeneration of power is seriously endangering the fate of socialism. . . . Today, probably a return to the policy of the New Course. . . could still check the growing crisis and avert catastrophe. But it is doubtful

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whether a return to the June principles would suffice as a solution tomorrow . . . . if this does not happen soon, there is a danger that the masses, having lost their faith, will reject both the June way and the communist party, and it will become necessary to make a much greater retreat in order to keep the situation under control.[31]

Taking the pulse of the growing crisis, the Imre Nagy of 1955–56 had thus come face to face with the imperatives of reform and independence, though he had also believed in the possibility of shaping a Marxist, humane, and Hungarian political order within the post-Stalinist framework of the Soviet bloc.

Yet, during its initial days, the revolution brought to power the Muscovite reformer of 1953 vintage. It was almost as if Nagy did not know or did not want to know that a revolution had begun, that the people had transcended his "June way and the communist party," and that, therefore, it *had* "become necessary to make a much greater retreat." Was he a realist who understood the limits of Soviet tolerance or had he lost his nerve? Did responsibility make him waver? Did he become a victim of the siege mentality that engulfed party headquarters? Did he find Gerő's—and Mikoyan's and Suslov's and Andropov's—arguments about the dangers of "counterrevolution" so persuasive as to break ranks with his ardent supporters and forget his own prophetic warnings? The whole country wondered.

The most widely accepted explanation was that Nagy had become a prisoner of party headquarters. In a special sense, this was—and remains—a plausible explanation. For Nagy *was* a prisoner of the communist political mentality permeating party headquarters—the prisoner of a limited ideological horizon and of intraparty intrigues—from which there was no easy escape. His prophetic words about a coming crisis

[31]Nagy, *On Communism*, pp. 49–50.

Soviet Party First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev speaks with a delegate to the 20th CPSU Congress in February 1956; behind him are Nikolay Bulganin and Mikhail Suslov. –SOVFOTO.

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notwithstanding, Nagy could only imagine but did not expect something like *this* to happen. Those around him at party headquarters could not even imagine such a revolution taking place.

As Hegedüs describes the scene at party headquarters, the basic question was not even considered at first: could the party make such timely and significant concessions as would satisfy all or most of the insurgents? Instead, the question on everyone's mind was this: how could the party most effectively isolate and then break down this counterrevolutionary insurgency? Thus, all of the initial speeches and measures reflected the traditional mentality of authoritarian leaders, communist and otherwise, for whom the only question is not how to solve the problem but how to protect their power. For leaders of this kind—for Gerő and his colleagues—the answer was self-evident. First, they must use force to defeat the rebellion. Second, by first co-opting him and then making him appear to be the man in charge of breaking down the rebellion, they must discredit and then defeat Imre Nagy as well.

From the moment Mikoyan and Suslov arrived at party headquarters on October 24, unannounced and in an armored car, it was obvious that on the second point the interests of the Soviet Union and of the Gerő group diverged. The Soviet Union wanted to end the rebellion, a task for which it judged Nagy and not Gerő to be the right man. While Gerő had expected to get the job done, consolidate his and his group's hold on the levers of power, and then remove Nagy, the Soviet Union wanted Gerő out of the way so as to restore order quickly, and if possible, avoid further violence. Mikoyan and Suslov told Gerő immediately that his speech of the night before had been unduly provocative and that he must go.[32] A TASS report issued in Moscow also signaled the Kremlin's preference; it mentioned Nagy twice by name. He was given credit for the declaration of martial law, which was said to have been necessary to repel "fascist thugs" and "enemy elements," and for having "called on the whole people to maintain calm and order."

With Mikoyan and Suslov in attendance, the Politburo replaced Gerő with János Kádár on the next day, October 25. Nagy broke the news on the radio. He also offered amnesty to those who "immediately stop fighting and surrender their arms," and then mentioned for the first time that the government would soon initiate negotiations with the Soviet Union concerning various aspects of Soviet-Hungarian relations including the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungarian territory. "Under the leadership of the party," as Nagy said, the rebellion must be ended. His policies and words had Moscow's approval.

If Nagy's announcement had been made just one day, let alone one week, earlier, it would have had an extraordinary effect. He spoke of amnesty, not counterrevolution. He called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary, not for their "fraternal assistance." Next to him was Kádár, a victim of Stalinist purges, not Gerő, who held responsibility for Stalinist purges. True, Nagy affirmed the "leadership" of the communist party, but what changes he announced! Alas, coming as they did after the ÁVO had just massacred over 100 demonstrators at Parliament Square, Nagy's words fell on deaf ears. The initiated few understood that he was making some headway with the Kremlin's representatives and with the remaining diehards at party headquarters. But, as would happen again and again in the coming days, his announcement did not play well in the streets. He was a step or two behind the latest, increasingly impatient demands. At this point, for example, it was no longer sufficient to declare that the government would "initiate" negotiations about the withdrawal of Soviet troops; the streets, resounding with the rhythmic *Ruszkik haza!* wanted him to report results. *It was too little and too late.*

Conversely, the popular demands made on Nagy were *too many and too soon.* One delegation after another kept telling him what to do and especially to be more daring. He replied, impatiently, that they should go home and implement his policies. Nagy remained a cautious reformer. Above all, he did not want to go beyond the understanding he had reached with Mikoyan and Suslov, which appeared to approximate the deal the Kremlin had made with Gomułka in Poland: "wider internal autonomy for the Hungarian party, measures of liberalization, 'domesticism' taking account of Hungarian peculiarities, discarding of compromised Stalinists, revision of trade agreements with the Soviets, and also the later withdrawal of Soviet troops." Such a compromise "would help to maintain the essence of party rule and Soviet control, but would do away with ostensible shortcomings and satisfy sensitivities of national feelings."[33]

This was the general idea that Mikoyan and Suslov had left behind them when they returned to the Soviet Union. It is not known precisely how Moscow maintained high-level contact with Nagy while the two Soviet trouble-shooters were gone for four days, between October 26 and 30. Presumably, there were many

[32]Hegedüs, op. cit., p. 271.

[33]Váli, *Rift and Revolt*, p. 285.

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conversations on the telephone. Of course, Ambassador Andropov was in Budapest. Most important, the Soviet troops were there. But it is clear that *until October 30 or 31 Moscow was supportive of Nagy's decisions,* including the appointment of a few noncommunists to his cabinet (October 27), the formation of a more or less centrist six-member party Presidium to take over the functions of the Central Committee (October 28), and the abolition of ÁVO (October 29).

Not without some ambiguity, Moscow kept signaling its approval of what Nagy was doing. In contrast to Khrushchev's early skepticism about a political solution, voiced privately on October 24,[34] Radio Moscow now praised the "newly formed Hungarian government headed by Imre Nagy" for having mastered the situation, adding that "the calculations of the counterrevolutionary insurgents are suffering failure."[35] At a diplomatic reception in Moscow on October 29, Soviet Foreign Minister Dmitriy Shepilov referred to "the well-known fact" about counterrevolutionary activities, but he confirmed that the sooner these activities ceased "the sooner would the Soviet troops withdraw." At the same reception, Marshal Georgiy Zhukov, the minister of defense, said: ". . . the situation in Hungary is improving. A government has been formed *which is enjoying our support* and the support of the Hungarian people."[36] In his memoirs, Khrushchev confirmed that the Kremlin had vacillated between "crushing the mutiny" and getting "out of Hungary." "I don't know how many times we changed our minds back and forth," he recalled.[37]

It can only be surmised that, after their return to Moscow on October 26, Mikoyan and Suslov convinced the Soviet Politburo of the *possibility* that Nagy might still find a political solution to the crisis. Indeed, when they returned to Budapest on October 30 to take a second look at the situation, they were outgoing and even friendly. Hungary was following the "Polish formula." The atmosphere at party headquarters and in the Parliament building was excellent. Their discussion with Nagy, Kádár, and Tildy went exceptionally well. Mikoyan spent an hour with Tildy, who raised several issues, including the possibility of reestablishing the 1945 four-party coalition government and thus meeting one of the revolution's most important demands. Mikoyan, who had apparently anticipated the question, agreed. A jubilant Tildy immediately told József Kővágó, the designated mayor of Budapest and one of the leaders of the Smallholders' Party, that Mikoyan "accepted everything."[38] Indeed, Mikoyan and Suslov appeared willing to settle two other key issues as well. In their discussion with Nagy and Kádár, they agreed to the prompt withdrawal of Soviet troops and to negotiations about Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact.

An enterprising reporter from the new revolutionary newspaper *Igazság* managed to enter party headquarters where he found himself face to face with Mikoyan and Suslov (whose presence in Budapest had not been announced). The young journalist was not told very much, but he could report that all seemed well. They smiled, and they even shook *his* hand on the way out of the building.[39]

Nagy made his historic announcement on the radio at 2:28 P.M. on October 30, 1956:

In the interest of the further democratization of the country's life the cabinet abolishes the one-party system and places the country's government on the basis of democratic cooperation between the coalition parties as they existed in 1945. In accordance with this decision, a new national government with a smaller inner cabinet has been established, at the moment with only limited powers. The members of the new cabinet are Imre Nagy, Zoltán Tildy, Béla Kovács, Ferenc Erdei, János Kádár, Géza Losonczy, and a person to be appointed by the Social Democratic Party.

Next at the microphone was a fragile but exultant Zoltán Tildy of the Smallholders' Party, once a Calvinist minister:

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[34]On October 24, Khrushchev told the Yugoslav ambassador in Moscow that, if possible, he wanted to find a political solution. "But Khrushchev gave the impression that he had no faith in such a solution." See Mićunović, *Moscow Diary*, p. 127.

[35]For the text of this broadcast, see Melvin J. Lasky, Ed., *The Hungarian Revolution*, New York, Praeger, 1957, p. 104. The following day (Oct. 28, 1956), *Pravda* (Moscow) carried a similar article entitled "The Collapse of the Anti-People Adventure in Hungary," which prompted the Hungarian party daily *Szabad Nép* to take issue with the Soviet claim that a counterrevolution was taking place in Hungary. In point of fact, the *Pravda* article, like the Radio Moscow broadcast the night before, contained an essentially positive message; even its very title referred to the *collapse* of the insurgency. The nuance is important here: at this time, Soviet signals stressed the "collapse of the counterrevolution" rather than the idea that what transpired in Hungary should be classified as a "counterrevolution." For a unique and even moving rebuttal of *Pravda*, see Miklós Molnár, "Reply to *Pravda*," *Szabad Nép*, Oct. 29, 1956. For an English translation, see Lasky, *Hungarian Revolution*, p. 135.

[36]Lasky, *Hungarian Revolution*, pp. 132–33, emphasis added. For the original report on the reception, see T. Popovski's account in *Borba* (Belgrade), Oct. 30, 1956.

[37]*Khrushchev Remembers*, translated and edited by Strobe Talbott, Boston, Little, Brown and Co., 1970, p. 418.

[38]József Kővágó, *You Are All Alone*, New York, Praeger, 1959, pp. 197–202.

[39]"Eye to Eye with Mikoyan and Suslov," *Igazság*, Nov. 1, 1956.

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Hungarian Brothers! The will of the nation, the national revolution has prevailed. I stand before the microphone deeply moved. I don't have a prepared text, my speech may be disjointed, but with my heart overflowing with love and joy I salute the beloved youth of Hungary . . . . We are a small nation, but we want to live in this country in our Hungarian way and in freedom. I am convinced that once the peoples and leaders of the Soviet Union face not a humiliated but a free nation and its representatives, they will see how different our relationship can be, how much more understanding, respect, and affection there will be . . . . Let there be no more sacrifice, no more destruction. Let us all be faithful to ourselves, to this historic moment, let us make peace and order in our country. Rejoice my Hungarian brothers and let's get to work.[40]

For the first time since the revolution began one very long week before, the Nagy regime was not far behind the people's demands. Although some Soviet troops were still in the country, the government could list quite a few accomplishments. Most of the Stalinists had cleared out of party headquarters. Nagy had obtained a measure of authority. Under Pál Maléter's leadership, the Hungarian army had restored a modicum of order. Though some of the insurgents, waiting for the Soviet troops to leave, held on to their weapons, they were beginning to line up behind the government. The "much greater retreat" Nagy had anticipated in 1955 "in order to keep the situation under control" had already been implemented—with the Kremlin's apparent approval.

Whatever suspicions Nagy may have still entertained about Soviet duplicity were dispelled later that evening—or so it seemed at that time. For next morning's *Pravda* was to carry the official declaration of the Soviet government, which no longer characterized the Hungarian situation as a "counterrevolution." "The course of events has shown," the Soviet government stated, using its customary jargon, "that the working people of Hungary. . . are rightfully raising the question of the need to eliminate the serious defects in the field of economic construction, of improving further the material well-being of the population and of combating bureaucratic distortions in the state apparatus." The operative parts of the official declaration then stated:

It is known that, in accordance with the Warsaw Treaty and governmental agreements, Soviet units are stationed in the Hungarian and Romanian republics. . . . With a view to ensuring the mutual security of the socialist countries, the Soviet government is ready to review with the other socialist countries of the Warsaw Treaty the question of Soviet troops stationed on the territory of the above-mentioned countries . . . . Since it considers that the further presence of the Soviet Army units can serve as a cause for even greater aggravation of the situation, the Soviet government has given instructions to its military command to withdraw the Soviet Army units from Budapest as soon as this is considered necessary by the Hungarian government.[41]

The Kremlin Had Enough

This statement appeared in the morning edition of *Pravda* on October 31, 1956. It was almost certainly on that day, while Mikoyan and Suslov were still so agreeable in Budapest, that the Soviet Union decided to overthrow the Nagy government. My reading of the evidence suggests that, the initial *military* decision to mobilize the Soviet armed forces having been made prior to the publication of the *Pravda* declaration, the ultimate *political* decision to deploy the forces, invade Hungary, and overthrow the Nagy government was made on Wednesday, October 31, in Mikoyan's and Suslov's absence.

The evidence for this contention is: (1) it was during the night of October 31 and the morning of November 1 that new Soviet troops entered the country; (2) Imre Nagy's relationship with the Russians suddenly deteriorated during the morning hours of November 1; and (3) on November 1, Khrushchev, Molotov, and Malenkov were already secretly consulting with the Polish leadership in Brest, near the Soviet-Polish border, following which Khrushchev and Malenkov went on to Bucharest the same day to brief the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Czechoslovak leaders.[42] Moreover, Khrushchev confirmed in his memoirs that the decision to intervene was made while Mikoyan and Suslov "were not present."[43]

On Thursday, November 1, Nagy was awakened with the news of Soviet troops crossing the Soviet-Hungarian border. He tried to get in touch with the Kremlin but could not. (Mikoyan and Suslov were on a plane between Budapest and Moscow, while Khrushchev, Molotov, and Malenkov were on their way to Brest.) Nagy ordered a news blackout on the apparent

[40]Both quotes are from *Magyar Nemzet* (Budapest), Oct. 31, 1956.

[41]*Pravda*, Oct. 31, 1956.
[42]Mićunović, *Moscow Diary*, p. 132.
[43]*Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 417.

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Soviet invasion, as a result of which there were many rumors but few reliable facts. As many of the insurgents drew their conclusion from what they saw—the ongoing and visible evacuation of Soviet forces from Budapest—there was a curious mixture of joy and anxiety in the air. One newspaper headline captured the mood of the day: *Are They Coming or Going?*

Nagy held at least five meetings with Ambassador Andropov on November 1. He demanded to know what was going on. After checking with the Kremlin, Andropov at one point returned to Nagy's office in the Parliament building to assure the Prime Minister that the Soviet government stood by its "historic" declaration of October 30 and that Soviet troops had *entered* Hungary only to safeguard the security of Soviet troops *leaving* Hungary. This was too much for Nagy. He bluntly warned Andropov that Hungary was prepared to declare its neutrality. When Andropov failed to return with a satisfactory reply, Nagy knew that the "Soviet comrades" had deceived him.[44] But he was no comrade any more, certainly not theirs.

Nagy called into session the executive committee of the communist party to obtain its support for a declaration on Hungary's neutrality and on the country's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. Two members of the committee, György Lukács and Zoltán Szántó, as well as Sándor Haraszti, ex officio member as editor of the party daily, expressed reservations. But the motion easily carried. Nagy took the proposal to his cabinet. There everybody supported him. Then Nagy made this statement on the radio a few minutes before 8:00 P.M.:

The Hungarian National Government, imbued with profound responsibility toward the Hungarian people and history, and giving expression to the undivided will of millions of Hungarians, declares the neutrality of the Hungarian People's Republic. It is on the basis of independence and equality, and in accordance with the spirit of the UN Charter, that the Hungarian people wish to live in true friendship with their neighbors, with

[44]For months to come, in Romanian exile as well as in Hungarian jails, Nagy's refrain about the Soviet leaders remained the same: "Becsaptak . . . elárultak" (They deceived me . . . they betrayed me).

Some of the Soviet officers who led the intervention that crushed the Hungarian Revolution in November 1956.
–Pictorial Parade.

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the Soviet Union and with all peoples of the world. . . . Working millions of Hungary! Revolutionary determination, sacrificial work, and consolidation of order [will] protect and strengthen our homeland—the free, independent, democratic, and neutral Hungary.[45]

Prior to Nagy's speech on November 1, Kádár had disappeared from Budapest in the company of Ferenc Münnich, an old Kremlin loyalist and a former Hungarian ambassador to Moscow and Belgrade. Both had backed Nagy's moves. Kádár had been a strong and enthusiastic supporter of the formation of the multiparty system. He had voted in favor of declaring Hungary's neutrality. In a radio speech recorded earlier that day, he had referred to "our glorious revolution." Earlier that day he had also defended the cabinet's decision about neutrality and the Warsaw Pact in a confrontation with Andropov. In the presence of the whole cabinet, he reportedly told the Soviet ambassador that if Soviet tanks were to reenter Budapest, he would personally join the armed struggle against them.[46] It can only be surmised that sometime that day Münnich and Kádár were informed of the Soviet decision to intervene, and they decided to break ranks with Nagy and the revolution.

The remaining events of November 1–4 can be summarized briefly. Most of them fell into a pattern of duplicity. Throughout the country, Soviet troops were in evidence everywhere; they were coming from bases in the Soviet Union and Romania. They were no longer in evidence in Budapest, however, and the Soviet Union kept assuring the Nagy government that it was still prepared to negotiate the details of their withdrawal from the whole country. Indeed, negotiations on that subject began during the day on November 3 and considerable progress was being made.[47] But on that fateful night, all pretense was gone when General Ivan Serov, the Soviet security chief, broke up the "negotiating" session and arrested all members of the Hungarian delegation. At dawn on November 4, 1956, Soviet forces, having entered Budapest overnight and occupied the Parliament building, crushed the revolution.

During the last three days before the attack on Budapest, Hungarians had allowed themselves the luxury of a bit of self-deception. Among ordinary people, optimists could still find evidence of a Soviet willingness to reach an acceptable compromise. If they were *coming,* why were they *going?* There was no panic. At least in Budapest, life was returning to something approaching normalcy. More food was available, some of the streetcars and buses were operating, several factories were reopened. The city was flooded with announcements about the formation of social and political organizations and parties, and every shade of political opinion was reflected in dozens of new newspapers and weeklies. The scope of Soviet troop movements was not widely known.

In the Parliament building and at party headquarters, the facts about Soviet troop movements were well known. One of the least appealing members of Nagy's group, Zoltán Szántó, approached the Yugoslav embassy on Thursday, November 1, with a request for asylum. That afternoon Münnich, Kádár, and apparently three or four other leading Communists departed for the Soviet side. But Nagy remained calm. Judging by his activities, he may have considered it a possibility—a most remote possibility, to be sure—that the Kremlin had not yet made the final decision, or if it had that the Soviet Politburo might still reverse itself. If so, what should he do? What would impress the Kremlin? First, and most important, was the further consolidation of domestic order and stability. For it would be one thing for Moscow to invade a conflict-ridden country in which Communists—mainly ÁVO officers—were being killed; it would be something else to invade a peaceful country in which law and order prevailed. For this reason the government kept issuing almost desperate pleas for discipline and self-restraint. Second, Nagy had reason to believe that the Kremlin might be sensitive to world opinion. Andropov had asked him on November 1 not to turn to the United Nations; this sort of thing seemed to matter to Moscow. At the time, Nagy had agreed to wait on the condition that the influx of Soviet troops would be stopped. When it did not, he responded not only by sending several appeals to the UN but by notifying all diplomatic missions in Budapest about the situation.

There was nothing else to do. On November 3, Nagy declined to give a press conference he had scheduled for foreign journalists; he asked Tildy and Losonczy to make a statement instead and to answer questions. They made a heroic effort to project calm—and to let Moscow know that Hungary was eager to protect the "gains of socialism." That afternoon, István Bibó, a

[45] *Magyar Nemzet,* Nov. 2, 1956.

[46] Méray, *Thirteen Days,* p. 194.

[47] Agreement was reached on the following: (1) Soviet troops will leave Hungary before January 15, 1957; (2) While the troops remain in the country, the Hungarian government will take care of their needs; (3) Hungary will repair all Soviet monuments and will bid respectful farewell to the departing Soviet troops; (4) After the two delegations consult their respective governments, they will meet at 10:00 p.m. at the headquarters of the Soviet forces stationed in Hungary [near Csepel, outside of Budapest] in order to sign an appropriate document. See Béla Király, *Az elsö háború szocialista országok között* (The First War between Socialist Countries), New Brunswick, NJ, Magyar Öregdiák Szövetség/Bessenyei György Kör, 1981, p. 58.

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minister of state in Nagy's last cabinet, asked General Béla Király, the highest-ranking Hungarian army officer after Maléter, how long Hungary could resist. Budapest could be held for one or two days at most, Király replied, but probably only for a few hours.[48] Bibó appeared resigned. So did Nagy. He had done what he could. He had tried to satisfy the Kremlin's needs and concerns. He had been mindful of the security interests of the Soviet Union and of the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe. He had accepted the "Polish formula" for Hungary. He had believed that the Soviet leaders trusted him and wanted him to build a Hungarian-style socialist system. Only after he had lost Moscow's trust on October 31, or perhaps the day before that, did he choose to proceed on his own. Nagy's cautious patriotism prevailed as he refused to order the Hungarian army to do battle against impossible odds.[49]

The Question of Soviet Motives

Having briefed their allies first in Brest (accompanied there by Molotov) and then in Bucharest on the impending intervention on November 1, and after a brief stopover in Moscow, Khrushchev and Malenkov continued their secret journey to the Yugoslav island of Brioni to see Tito on November 2. The Yugoslav side was represented by Tito, his two closest associates Eduard Kardelj and Aleksander Ranković, and by Veljko Mićunović, the Yugoslav ambassador to the Soviet Union. The discussion, all about Hungary, lasted for 10 hours. The Soviet leaders left for Moscow the next morning. Mićunović kept detailed notes about the proceedings in his diary.[50]

Of the two Soviet leaders, Khrushchev seemed to carry the day. He said they came to inform the Yugoslavs "about the Soviet Union's decision" and to hear Tito's views. Khrushchev ticked off four "external" reasons and an "internal" one for what Moscow was about to do. They were the following: (1) Communists were being murdered in Hungary; (2) Nagy withdrew from the Warsaw Pact, declared neutrality, and appealed to the United Nations; (3) capitalism was about to be restored in Hungary; (4) the British-French-Israeli intervention in Suez would divert the world's attention from Soviet "assistance"; and (5) if he failed to act, Stalinist diehards and especially leaders of the Soviet army would hold the "loss of Hungary" against the new political leadership in the Kremlin. As to implementation, Malenkov added that the Soviet armed forces were ready to act. They must go in "frontally and with great force," he said, because the Soviet Union was "completely isolated from the Hungarian people."

Factually, some of Khrushchev's reasons for the Kremlin's decision to intervene seemed more justified than others. (1) Communists, especially officers of the ÁVO, were indeed tortured and killed during the early days of the revolution. Their number was small; comparable outbreaks in history had produced many more summary executions. Still, Khrushchev could have been deeply disturbed by pictures carried in the Western press of Communists being cruelly treated and in some cases hanged on lampposts. (2) Hungary formally withdrew from the Warsaw Pact, declared its neutrality, and appealed to the United Nations only *after* new Soviet troops had entered Hungary; indeed, the threat of intervention *caused* these measures and declarations to be adopted rather than the other way around. (3) Capitalism, perhaps on a small scale, might have returned to Hungary, especially in agriculture and the service industries. What actually happened at the time, however, was that every political party affirmed again and again that the "gains of socialism" would not be reversed. (4) The Suez crisis was very possibly the reason for the timing of the intervention rather than for the intervention itself. (5) According to Khrushchev, certain army and Stalinist elements maintained that "as long as Stalin was in command everybody obeyed," while the present group of Kremlin leaders could not even hold on to Hungary. He implied that the anti-Stalinists had to show firmness, outdo the Stalinists if necessary, in order pursue the course of de-Stalinization. Doing nothing would only play into the hands of Molotov and Kaganovich. This was but a veiled appeal for Tito's empathy—and it was something the Yugoslavs could understand and appreciate.[51]

[48]Ibid., p. 59.

[49]Nagy made the following statement on Radio Budapest at 5:19 a.m. on November 4: "This is Imre Nagy speaking, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Hungarian People's Republic. Today at daybreak Soviet forces started an attack against our capital, obviously with the intention to overthrow the legal Hungarian democratic government. Our troops are fighting. The government is in its place. I notify the people of our country and the entire world of this fact." Lasky, *Hungarian Revolution*, p. 228. In point of fact, Nagy refused to order General Király to engage his troops. For their two dramatic conversations during the night of November 3, see Király, op. cit., pp. 62–64.

[50]This paragraph is based on Mićunović, *Moscow Diary*, pp. 130–42.

[51]Of course, there must have been other Soviet considerations as well, ones that either Khrushchev did not mention to Tito or that Mićunović did not include in his *Moscow Diary*. For example, the Chinese leaders were known to have advised the Kremlin against military intervention, at least at the beginning, while the Romanians, fearful of the impact of the revolution on the large Hungarian minority in Romania, were early advocates of such an intervention. Moscow might also have taken account of the preoccupation of the United States with presidential elections that week which might have influenced the timing of the intervention. For a sound analysis of Soviet policy, see Paul E. Zinner, *Revolution in Hungary*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1962, pp. 320–26.

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What can be made of Khrushchev's reasoning, of Soviet motives? To the extent that his explanation was offered in such a secret setting and to the extent that its summary—from a highly intelligent and sophisticated participant's diary—can be regarded as reliable, his points offer unusually valuable insights into the Kremlin's own assessment of the decision to intervene. That much said, it is still important to add that a decision of this magnitude is not likely to have been made on the basis of such specific reasons alone. Nor is it necessarily true that the leaders' motives were completely apparent even to themselves. Indeed, in my view, Khrushchev's explanation should be interpreted to mean that the Soviet leaders responded primarily to their sense of threat, to their fear of vulnerability, to their concern about the reputation and hence the power of the Soviet Union. As Khrushchev said in Brioni: "If we let things take their course, the West would say we are either stupid or weak, and that's one and the same thing. We cannot possibly permit it, either as communists and internationalists or as the Soviet state." This rings true; fear is a great inventor. By saying "if we let things take their course," Khrushchev seemed to be alluding to what *might happen*. More lynchings? Capitalism? Neutralism today, NATO tomorrow? What then of the Soviet sphere in Eastern Europe, who's next to go? Whether these developments were or were not likely to happen did not really matter; what mattered was that they might. Therefore, the Soviet leaders had to respond by force to overcome their fear of all the uncertainties Hungary implied. Among these uncertainties, the fear of losing control over the bloc, and then being seen by the West as weak, appeared to be their most compelling reason to act.

As the Kremlin's leading anti-Stalinist, Khrushchev's power was also very much on the line. His name was synonymous with the 20th Party Congress, with de-Stalinization. The Hungarian revolution, which began as an intraparty struggle between Stalinists and anti-Stalinist reformers in 1953, would not have happened in the absence of the Congress, in the absence of de-Stalinization, in the absence of Khrushchev. True, Khrushchev had denounced Nagy in 1955. But his colleagues knew, and Khrushchev feared that they remembered, who was ultimately responsible for de-Stalinization in Hungary. Thus the Hungarian revolution found Khrushchev politically vulnerable, so much so that he had to prove anew that he could be firm and indeed uncompromising. As he had done in 1955, then, he once again deserted Nagy—whose anti-Stalinist views were so very close to his own.

In retrospect, it is as futile to speculate about what Imre Nagy should or should not have done (or what Khrushchev could or could not have done had he had more political room to maneuver) as it is to bemoan the Hungarian people's lack of realism. For the Soviet intervention was only marginally related to what Nagy had done or had failed to do. It was not caused by his "provocative" declaration about neutrality and the Warsaw Pact. In fact, the opposite is true: it was the (second) Soviet intervention on the night of October 31 that prompted Nagy, *now* a heretic and patriot, to shed his past as a Muscovite loyalist and issue his historic declaration.

It is also futile, even cynical perhaps, to instruct the people about what they should or should not have done. Unrealistic as any popular uprising in Eastern Europe may be, once such an uprising begins it cannot be expected to be modest, limited, prudent, and properly calibrated. Because 1956 was a response both to the complete suppression of the country's independence and to extremely harsh dictatorial rule, it was a revolution made by people for whom a hero's death had become a meaningful alternative to a coward's submission. Thus the revolution's excessive demands, its lack of realism, was a function of what the Hungarian people had been denied. They only reacted to the excessive demands that had been made on them, to the lack of realism in the policies of the Kremlin and the Rákosi-Gerő regimes since 1947–48.

As for the personal drama between Khrushchev and Nagy, the tragedy of their encounter was that while Khrushchev's behavior was circumscribed by the fears and the intricate politics of the Kremlin, Nagy's eventual resistance was fueled by a true believer's sense of revulsion over being betrayed.

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Moscow and Aden: Coping with a Coup

David Pollock

Two weeks of bloody fighting in January 1986 ousted President Ali Nasir Muhammad of the People's Democratic Republic of [South] Yemen (PDRY), the closest Soviet ally on the Arabian Peninsula and indeed in the entire Middle East. Today, six months later, the upheaval in South Yemen's capital of Aden has been largely forgotten amid all the turmoil elsewhere in the region. Still, poor and sparsely populated as it is, South Yemen's strategic location and unique status as the only avowedly Marxist Arab country merit close and continuing interest. Moreover, this latest link in a long chain of violent internal political crises in Aden offers an instructive illustration of two important themes in contemporary international affairs: acute factional rivalry within a Third World Marxist regime, and assertive Soviet responses to it. The recent crisis in South Yemen is all the more intriguing in light of evidence that the Soviets mounted a limited but effective military intervention there during the January battles, and that even now the situation in that volatile corner of the Arabian Peninsula is still not fully stable.

Background

While a detailed historical analysis of South Yemeni politics, of Soviet Mideast policy, or even of Soviet–South Yemeni relations is beyond the scope of this essay, a brief background sketch is required to set the stage for the latest relevant developments in all three areas.[1] Ever since South Yemen gained independence from Britain in 1967, the Soviets have been deeply and increasingly involved in all aspects of its economic, and military affairs. Indeed, even before the British withdrew, the Soviets provided indirect support for one of the two major rival (and regionally and tribally distinct) local guerrilla movements. Here, as elsewhere, Moscow picked pragmatism over ideology, in this case supporting the non-Marxist but Egyptian-allied Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY) at the expense of Yemen's ideologically more "correct" National Liberation Front (NLF). Yet, when the latter movement won its struggle against both British power and local rivals, and then turned to Moscow for aid against sporadic Saudi-backed tribal resistance, the Soviets moved quickly to support it.

The new regime soon became even more radical. Less than two years after independence, South Yemen's original leader was replaced in the first of a

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[1]For background on South Yemen and its relations with Moscow, see Norman Cigar, "State and Society in South Yemen," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), May-June 1985, pp. 41–58; idem, "South Yemen and the USSR: Prospects for the Relationship," *The Middle East Journal* (Washington, DC), Autumn 1985, pp. 775–95; Fred Halliday, "Yemen's Unfinished Revolution: Socialism in the South," *MERIP Reports* (New York), October 1979; Mark N. Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986; Joseph Kostiner, *The Struggle for South Yemen*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1984; Laurie Myiroie, *Politics and the Soviet Presence in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen: Internal Vulnerabilities and Regional Challenges*, Santa Monica, CA, The Rand Corporation, 1983; Stephen Page, *The Soviet Union and the Yemens: Influence in Asymmetrical Relationships*, New York, Praeger, 1985; B. R. Pridham, Ed., *Contemporary Yemen: Politics and Historical Background*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1984; and Robert W. Stookey, *South Yemen: A Marxist Republic in Arabia*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1982.

For a review of recent Soviet writing on the area, see Jacob Landau, "Soviet Works on the Arabian Peninsula," *Middle East Studies* (London), January 1985, pp. 89–92. I am indebted to these authors, and particularly to discussions with Dr. Katz and Dr. Cigar, for their analyses of South Yemeni affairs.

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Fires in Aden during the January 1986 coup that pitted factions of the Yemen Socialist Party against one another.

–SYGMA.

series of palace coups, and his successors abruptly began the process of nationalizing large sectors of the country's backward economy. Soviet reaction to the change of leaders set a pattern that has endured to the present day: Moscow "praised each one while he was in power, but quickly embraced his successor,"[2] while continuing to provide each new South Yemeni regime with economic and especially military assistance and advisers. Soviet economic aid to South Yemen was limited and inefficient, and, to judge from occasional hints in the media, neither side was entirely happy with its results.[3] Military aid, by contrast, was extensive. Over the past 15 years, Moscow has supplied Aden with over US$2 billion worth of weapons, enough to equip a reasonably modern force of about 30,000 men (plus a somewhat larger number of militia and internal security forces).[4]

Part of the reason for Soviet interest in South Yemen, in the early years, lay in Moscow's active competition with Beijing for influence in this newly independent country, as elsewhere in the Third World. Over the next decade, however, that factor dwindled into insignificance as China essentially withdrew from the field. South Yemen's own increasingly Soviet-style Marxist line offered an ideological basis for continued close relations with Moscow. On foreign policy issues, too, Aden offered Moscow almost total support. While the two sides agreed to disagree, for example, about the hypothetical Soviet proposal for an international Arab-Israeli peace conference, Aden has been the only Arab (or indeed Muslim) capital—except, of course, for Kabul—to endorse the Soviet position consistently and unequivocally on the much more immediate issue of Afghanistan. Even so, Aden's comparatively isolated status within the Arab camp has considerably devalued such services to Soviet regional objectives.

Instead, the Soviet stake in South Yemen became primarily a military/strategic one. Although the PDRY did not allow sovereign Soviet bases on its territory,

[2]Katz, op. cit., p. 90.

[3]Ibid., pp. 87–90; Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," pp. 778, 785, 788–89; Page, op. cit., Chs. 2–4, passim, esp. pp. 109 fn. 71, 113–16.

[4]Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," pp. 777–78; and Katz, op. cit., pp. 83–87. See also The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1985-86*, London, IISS, 1985, p. 87. These figures are actually fairly modest by Mideast standards; but, to put them in perspective, one might note that the Soviets have provided about the same quantity and quality of arms to South Yemen as to neighboring (and periodically threatened) North Yemen, which has more than four times the population.

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Soviet air and naval forces gained practically unlimited access to important facilities there. These amply proved their worth during the massive transshipment of Soviet arms and troops across the narrow Bab Al-Mandab straits to Ethiopia during the Horn of Africa conflict of 1977–78. When Somalia, in response, expelled the Soviets from their major coastal positions at Berbera, Aden became a natural substitute; ever since, it has been the Indian Ocean port most frequently visited by the growing Soviet fleet, reportedly including its nuclear submarines.[5] A treaty of friendship signed by the two countries in 1979 merely codified this intimate bilateral connection.

Of particular importance in this context is the passageway through the straits off Aden. This transit route is so important for Soviet naval traffic that one British analyst (not noted for excessive alarm about Soviet power projection) has dubbed it Moscow's "Panama Canal"; its significance is further attested by the three visits that Admiral Sergey Gorshkov, as commander of the Soviet Navy, paid to the South Yemeni capital since 1974.[6] Over the past decade, indeed, the value of Aden's maritime "choke point" has been magnified by a whole series of regional strategic developments: the reopening of the Suez Canal; the massive Soviet-bloc influx into Ethiopia; the insecure conditions around the Straits of Hormuz due to the Iran-Iraq war; and finally, the resulting premium on oil pipelines to the Red Sea.

In the last two years, the Soviets have also been upgrading their long-range (as far afield as Diego Garcia) aerial reconnaissance squadrons based near Aden.[7] The number of well-placed Soviet-bloc military and internal security advisers in the country swelled, as their large-scale evacuation during the January 1986 battles revealed, to include several thousand Soviets and several hundred East Germans and Cubans. In addition, South Yemen reportedly hosts some operational Soviet and Cuban combat units, along with training camps and other facilities for several different PLO factions and a variety of radical terrorist organizations.[8] Altogether, in the words of an American expert, South Yemen has become "as closely tied militarily to the Soviet bloc as any state can be without actually being a member of the Warsaw Pact."[9]

This substantial military investment makes South Yemen, quite apart from its limited diplomatic and ideological value to Moscow, an important Soviet ally. As a result, the Soviets have had to pay close attention to the complex links between Aden's internal politics and its foreign policy, which have occasionally proved difficult for Moscow to manage. One authority has succinctly summarized the Soviet dilemma:

> *. . . the PDRY's attempts to spread revolution have hindered Soviet efforts to establish good relations with Saudi Arabia and the other conservative Arab Gulf states. At other times the Soviets have feared that South Yemen's . . . relations with these same states might lead Aden to distance itself from Moscow. Thus, both revolutionary and moderate leaders in Aden have posed problems for Moscow.*[10]

In 1978, according to credible published reports, Soviet-bloc advisers actively assisted in the forcible ouster of one South Yemeni leader, Salim Rubayyi' Ali. He had strayed too far in the direction of better ties to Saudi Arabia, while opposing the Soviet airlift to Ethiopia and Moscow's insistence on a "vanguard" South Yemeni socialist party; his belated attempts to repair frayed relations with Moscow proved insufficient.[11] But two years later, Moscow apparently acquiesced in the exile of his slavishly pro-Soviet replacement, Abd Al-Fattah Isma'il, bringing to power a more moderate leader, Ali Nasir Muhammad.

The motive for this change of course probably lay in Moscow's reassessment of the situation both inside South Yemen and even more so among its neighbors. The Soviets were now intent not on subverting but on cultivating the conservative governments of the Arabian Peninsula, for a variety of reasons: the utter collapse of a guerrilla insurgency in Oman, which led Moscow to conclude that there was "little profit in assisting rebels who are unlikely to come to power"; the perceived opportunities and dangers created by

[5]Nimrod Novik, "The Super-Powers in Southern Arabia: The End of a Decade," in Colin Legum, Ed., *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, Vol. 3, 1978/79, New York, Holmes and Meier, 1980, pp. 59–73; Jacob Goldberg, "The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen," in ibid., pp. 715–35; Page, op. cit., Chs. 3 and 4; Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," pp. 781–82.

[6]Fred Halliday, "The USSR and the Red Sea: Moscow's 'Panama Canal,'" in Abdel Majid Farid, Ed., *The Red Sea*, New York, St. Martin's, 1984, pp. 123–36; Katz, op. cit., p. 85.

[7]Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," p. 781.

[8]Ibid., pp. 781–84; and see below for sources on the January 1986 evacuation of foreigners. According to various press reports from Aden and Djibouti at that time, somewhere around 4,000–6,000 Soviet-bloc nationals were evacuated from South Yemen during the first week of fighting there, leaving behind perhaps several dozen comrades who were killed in the crossfire and an unknown number of others who continued their activities in the country. These numbers suggest that the Soviet-bloc presence in South Yemen was considerably larger than earlier published estimates, although some of the evacuees were probably dependents.

[9]Katz, op. cit., p. 87.

[10]Ibid., p 63.

[11]Haim Shaked and Tamar Yegness, "The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen," in Colin Legum, Ed., *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, Vol. 2, 1977/78, New York, Holmes and Meier, 1979, pp. 655–74; Page, op. cit., pp. 68–72, 76–78; Katz, op. cit., pp. 90–93, 95–97.

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the 1979 revolution in Iran; the prospect of much-needed economic aid from South Yemen's oil-rich neighbors for a less belligerent regime in Aden; the desire to stabilize friendly Soviet relations with the government of North Yemen, which had been a particular target of Isma'il's wrath; and the Soviets' own preoccupation with and anxiety over Afghanistan. All of this led the Soviets to support a more moderate leader in South Yemen, and Ali Nasir was their man.[12] This new strategy was presumably coordinated during frequent high-level Soviet–South Yemeni consultations. These included visits to Aden by Moscow's ranking Third World trouble-shooter, International Department Deputy Chief Karen Brutents, in March 1982 and October 1983, although no convincing account of the precise lines of Soviet policy formulation in this area can be pieced together from the public record.[13]

By late 1983, however, this record suggests that Moscow had begun to sense that the political pendulum in Aden had once again moved too far in a moderate direction. There were public signals of Soviet impatience with the slow pace of socialist transformation in South Yemen, and with what one local wit dubbed Ali Nasir's "Riyalpolitik" (that is, pursuit of Saudi petrodollar subsidies in return for moderation). Ali Nasir, like Rubayyi' Ali before him, attempted to parry these Soviet complaints with extra doses of revolutionary rhetoric and fulsome praise for Soviet "fraternal assistance." Moscow reciprocated with some lukewarm praise of its own, but quietly stepped up contacts with some of the South Yemeni leader's rivals, including key Politburo and military figures Ali Antar and Salih Muslih Qasim.[14]

Finally, in March 1985, the Soviets apparently encouraged the return from his Moscow exile of Ali Nasir's immediate predecessor and most dangerous opponent, Abd Al-Fattah Isma'il.[15] The intent was probably to further narrow Ali Nasir's margin for maneuver, while ostensibly fostering party unity. But, as one American observer noted prophetically at around the time,

Ali Nasir may be expected to try to consolidate his power . . . by eliminating his rivals . . . . It is not clear whether the Soviets . . . would accept this.[16]

The showdown between Isma'il and Ali Nasir came more rapidly and more violently than anyone, including the Soviets, had expected, and with results more bizarre than anyone could have foreseen. Indeed, when the crisis first erupted, the Soviets themselves were unclear for a while about just what they could and could not accept in Aden. With this background in mind, a closer look at the dramatic denouement of January 1986 is now in order.

Crisis and Coup

Almost from the moment he sent Isma'il into Soviet exile in 1980, Ali Nasir had had to contend with other rivals for power.[17] Not surprisingly, rivalry intensified when Isma'il returned five years later and predictably made common cause with Ali Nasir's other opponents; perhaps the most surprising thing about it was that he did it so energetically and so soon. There were internal political crises in Aden in the spring of 1985 and again in October, when a new party congress was held and a new Politburo and Central Committee formed. In the latter instance, factional rivalries became so bitter that outsiders—like George Habash of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a prominent Arab radical with long-standing close ties to South Yemen's leaders—were reportedly called in to mediate. The results of the October 1985 meetings were publicly hailed as a healing compromise. In fact, however, they appeared, on balance, to mark a further erosion in Ali Nasir's position, which had been under severe challenge for more than a year—and they left the underlying differences festering just below the surface of South Yemeni political life.[18] The following January,

[12]Robert Burrowes, "The Ali Abdallah Salih Regime: 1978–1984," *The Middle East Journal*, Summer 1985, pp. 287–316; Joseph Kostiner, "The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen," in Colin Legum, Haim Shaked, and Daniel Dishon, Eds., *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, Vol. 7, 1982/83, New York, Holmes and Meier, 1985, pp. 729–43; Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," p. 788; Page, op. cit., pp. 92, 99, 104, and Ch. 5, "Moscow, the PDRY and Oman: The Limitations of Influence, 1967–84"; Katz, op. cit., pp. 37–38, 73, 97–99, 184–85.

[13]Page, op. cit., pp. 91–92, 110.

[14]Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," pp. 777, 784, 788–92; idem, "State and Society in South Yemen," pp. 56–58; Page, op. cit., pp. 88–89, 116–18; Katz, op. cit., p. 101.

[15]Katz, op. cit., p. 94 fn. 133; Cigar, loc. cit.

[16]Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," pp. 790–91.

[17]*Al-Watan Al-Arabi* (Paris), Feb. 28–Mar. 6, 1986, pp. 27–29; Page, op. cit., pp. 105–07; Katz, op. cit., pp. 93–94, esp. fns. 224–26. [For purposes of clarity, Arabic names are rendered in conventional rather than strictly phonetic transliteration throughout the text and citations of this article—Author.]

[18]*Al-Tadamun* (London), Nov. 2–8, 1986, p. 14, trans. in Joint Publications Research Service, *Near East/South Asia Report* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *JPRS-NEA*), Jan. 24, 1986, pp. 112–13; Sulayman Nimr, "Yemen Looks to the Brothers for the Cost of the War of the Comrades," *Al-Mustaqbal* (Paris), Mar. 1, 1986, pp. 28–30; Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," pp. 790–92. See also the interview with Ali Nasir's eventual replacement, Haydar Abu Bakr Al-Attas, in *Al-Mustaqbal*, Feb. 22, 1986, trans. in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Middle East and Africa* (Washington, DC—hereafter *FBIS-MEA*), Feb. 24, 1986, pp. C/4–5.

(cont. p. 54)

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Party leader Ali Nasir Muhammad addresses the 3rd Congress of the Yemen Socialist Party in October 1985: the third person to his left is Salih Muslih Qasim (in uniform); sixth from Ali Nasir's left is Ali Antar (also in uniform); and directly behind Ali Antar, Abd al-Fattah Isma'il. The sign in the background reads: "Aden, October 1985"; the

Lebanese Communist Party Secretary General George Hawi was apparently called to Aden on another fruitless mediating mission.[19] The South Yemeni civil war began on the very next day.

The underlying reasons for this explosion included the perennial personal competition for power, coupled with regional (or "tribal") and to some extent also ideological divisions. For example, Ali Nasir could count on a concentration of supporters among his fellow Hassaniya tribesmen from his own native region of Abyan; while three of his leading opponents in the Politburo, Ali Antar, Ali Shayi' Hadi, and Salih Muslih Qasim, hailed from the Radfan tribe of the Lahij region. Isma'il, significantly, was actually from the North Yemeni part of the greater Yemeni "homeland," and championed the "radical" cause of forcing the pace of overall Yemeni unity. In this he was joined by Ali Antar and other influential opponents of Ali Nasir—and it was on this issue of unity with the North that internal South Yemeni political crises characteristically crystallized.[20]

Ali Nasir was later accused by his victorious opponents (not untypically for South Yemen, or indeed for other Marxist regimes) of contradictory crimes, including "rightist," "leftist opportunist," and even "Nazi" tendencies.[21] His real sins, it appears from a close and disinterested reading of the record, were probably that he went too far in opening up South Yemen (and

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The "working paper" circulated by South Yemen's ruling Yemen Socialist Party in September 1985 presented a strictly orthodox, Soviet-style Marxist analysis and program; for a critique of its "autocratic" and "atheistic" character by an exiled opposition group, see *Al-Wahdah* (Cairo), Sept. 15, 1985, trans. in *JPRS-NEA*, Jan. 15, 1986, pp. 117–26. On inter-Yemeni issues, however, the emphasis in official South Yemeni publications remained on peaceful cooperation rather than on "revolutionary" unity; see, e.g., the series of articles on bilateral economic linkages in *14 Uktubar* (Aden), Sept. 24, 26, 27, 1985, trans. in *JPRS-NEA*, Feb. 5, 1986, pp. 86–93.

[19]For Hawi's visit, see the report on Aden radio, Jan. 12, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 14, 1986, p. C/7; and the sensationalized account in *Al-Anba'* (Kuwait), Mar. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 10, 1986, pp. C/3–4.

[20]For background on these issues, see Burrowes, loc. cit.; and Page, op. cit., p. 91.

[21]See, e.g, press statement by the (new) YSP Central Committee on Aden radio, Jan. 24, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 27, 1986, pp. C/1–7; Aden radio, Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 3, 1986, pp. C/4–5.

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banner on the rostrum, "For the Sake of Defending the Yemeni Revolution, Implementing the Five-Year Plan, and Achieving Yemeni Unity."

–*14 Uktubar* (Aden), Oct. 13, 1985.

perhaps particularly his native province) to outside economic and political influences, and not far enough in promoting "radical" movement toward Yemeni unity and other such causes; and, especially, that he favored his supporters at the expense of his opponents.[22] Thus it was a volatile mixture of overlapping personal, regional, and ideological rivalries, all of which had been simmering for several years, that boiled over in a violent showdown in Aden during January 1986.

As for the sequence of events in the few days leading up to the shoot-out on January 13, it is not easy to sort out the fragmentary and conflicting accounts. Each side has accused the other of an intricate conspiracy of duplicity and brutality whose success depended upon firing the first shot; both sides are probably right. Ali Nasir, in other words, most likely tried to pre-empt his own imminent forcible ouster or assassination by having his rivals murdered at a "special" Politburo session.[23] Murdered most of them were, including Isma'il, Antar, Qasim, and Hadi. But then the South Yemeni President's plans went awry. Enough of his opponents survived, and enough military commanders and troops switched sides at the last minute, to defeat Ali Nasir's "loyalist" forces in 10 days of civil war that followed the Politburo massacre. Estimates of

[22]See, e.g., Aden radio, Feb. 5, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 6, 1986, pp. C /3–4; and, especially, the tendentious but revealing interview with Salim Salih Muhammad in *Al-Siyasah* (Kuwait), Feb. 15, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 19, 1986, pp. C/6–7.

[23]For varying accounts of the "double conspiracy," see the rebel radio broadcasts on Jan. 19, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 21, 1986, pp. C/2–15; Ali Nasir interviews in *Al-Majallah* (London), Jan. 28–Feb. 4, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 5, 1986, pp. C/2–3; *Al-Ittihad Al-Usbu'i* (Abu Dhabi), Feb. 13, 1986, pp. 10–11, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 14, 1986, pp. C/4–9, esp. p. C/8; *Al-Watan Al-Arabi*, Feb. 21–27, 1986, pp. 25–26; Al-Attas speech on Aden radio, Feb. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 6, 1986, pp. C/3–6; Al-Bayd interview in *Arab Times* (Kuwait), Feb. 11, 1986, in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 13, 1986, pp. C/6–7; *Al-Siyasah*, and Doha radio, Jan. 15, 1986, trans in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 15, 1986, p. C/4; *Al-Khalij* (Sharjah), Jan. 16, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, pp. C/5–6; and *Al-Ittihad* (Abu Dhabi), Jan. 24, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 27, 1986, pp. C/8–10; *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Mar. 26, 1986.

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the resulting damage and casualties vary, but a plausible figure might be around 7,000 killed and several billion dollars worth of property and installations destroyed. Ali Nasir himself, having committed the tactical error of seeking refuge outside the capital before the clashes erupted, was now forced to flee the country altogether for sanctuary in Ethiopia and North Yemen.[24] His attempt to use what one of his victorious rivals was soon calling "Mafia ways"[25] to resolve South Yemen's political battles had backfired disastrously.

Early Soviet Reactions

In view of the Soviets' very extensive presence in South Yemen, one obvious issue is whether they knew of and perhaps even approved the showdown in Aden in advance. The question was posed in stark terms by an anonymous Kuwaiti journalist: "Did the Soviet leadership abandon Ali Nasir Muhammad before the eruption of the recent fighting, or after it discovered that the sides opposing him were stronger?"[26]

Western analysts have lined up on opposite sides of this issue. Some have laid an anti–Ali Nasir conspiracy squarely at Moscow's door. With so many well-placed experts entrenched in Aden, they say, the Soviets must have known about each faction's plans and must have been able to alter the course of events almost at will. Others have exonerated Moscow from the charge of premeditated overthrow of a friendly ruler in this instance, on the grounds that the Soviets supported Ali Nasir right up until the end, and that, had they actually wanted to get rid of him, they could have arranged to do it in a much less sloppy fashion.[27]

The truth, as so often in the Middle East, appears to lie somewhere in the middle. It seems fairly certain that, for reasons of its own wider regional strategy, Moscow on the whole did support Ali Nasir's efforts to improve relations with the nearby conservative states, despite its ever more obvious misgivings about how far that process might go. Moscow was therefore probably not at first a partner in the plot against the South Yemeni leader. It also appears that the Soviets were taken by surprise at the timing and, especially, at the sheer violence of armed rebellion in Aden. On the other hand, Moscow's earlier encouragement of Ali Nasir's rivals implicated it in that rebellion, if only unwittingly. Moreover, Soviet specialists undoubtedly had some inkling of imminent political trouble between the two major South Yemeni factions; the signs were apparent even to outside observers. And, most important of all, as the following discussion will demonstrate, the Soviets recovered from their initial surprise quickly enough to intervene against Ali Nasir, and thereby help ensure the continued allegiance of his successors as the tide of battle turned in their favor.

The evidence that Moscow was caught by surprise and unable to control events in Aden is circumstantial but compelling. There is, first of all, the hasty and uncoordinated nature of the Soviets' effort to evacuate their nationals from the war-torn capital.[28] Then there is the rather unusual spectacle of a Soviet embassy subjected to hostile fire, apparently by disgruntled partisans of one or perhaps even both South Yemeni factions; observers arriving in Aden two weeks later recounted that the embassy still sported a banner reading, "Don't Shoot—Soviet Citizens Inside!"[29] Even more telling is the nature of the coup itself. For one thing, the vaunted East German internal security advisers were nowhere to be seen; the various South Yemeni leaders apparently preferred to rely, at least as a last resort, on coteries of heavily armed personal bodyguards. For another thing, the leaders of *both* major factions, it will be recalled, were removed from the picture; Ali Nasir ended up in exile, but his leading rivals ended up dead. It simply strains credulity to imagine that such a scenario could have been part of a Soviet design. A plot to eliminate *all* of South Yemen's rival leaders, and replace them with yet more pliant nonentities, is too Machiavellian even for Moscow—or at least too clairvoyant to be credible.[30]

[24]For accounts of the fighting, see the various contemporary radio reports trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 16, 1986, pp. C/3–6, and Jan. 17, 1986, pp. C/2–3; and subsequent daily editions through Jan. 24, 1986; *The New York Times*, Jan. 16, 17 , 22, 30, 1986; *The Washington Post*, Jan. 16 and 25, 1986; press statement by the (new) YSP Central Committee on Aden radio, Jan. 24, 1986, loc. cit.; *Khaleej Times* (Dubai), Jan. 30, 1986, in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan . 31, 1986, pp. C/5–6; *The Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), Feb. 11, 1986; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Feb. 25, 1986. See also the various partisan but plausible accounts in the South Yemeni exile opposition paper *Al-Amal* (Cairo), Jan. 19, 1986, trans. in *JPRS-NEA*, Mar. 10, 1986, pp. 101–09.

[25]Interview with Salim Salih Muhammad reported in *The New York Times*, Feb. 1, 1986.

[26]*Al-Qabas* (Kuwait), Jan. 28, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 30, 1986, p. C/1.

[27]An argument that Moscow actually planned Ali Nasir's overthrow has been made by, among others, Jeane Kirkpatrick, in *The Washington Post*, Feb. 4, 1986. Arguments that the Soviets were not directly implicated have been published by Mideast experts Patrick Seale, in *The Observer* (London), Jan. 19, 1986; Mark Katz, in *The Washington Post*, Feb. 8, 1986; and David Hirst, in *The Guardian* (Manchester), Feb. 12, 1986. See also *Khaleej Times*, Jan. 30, 1986, in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 31, 1986, pp. C/5–6.

[28]*The New York Times*, Jan. 23, 1986; *The Times* (London), Feb. 10, 1986. For other reports of Soviet casualties and damage to the Soviet embassy in Aden, see *Al-Khalij*, Jan. 20, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 21, 1986, p. C/16; and *Al-Ittihad* (Manama) and Radio AFP (Paris), Jan. 23, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 23, 1986, p. C/7.

[29]*The Washington Post*, Feb. 23, 1986.

[30]French ambassador Pierre Audebert went so far as to describe the Soviets as "completely bewildered and out of their depth" in this crisis (interview in *Le Monde* [Paris], Jan. 29, 1986). For an unsubstantiated report of internal Soviet differences on how to handle the situation, see *Al-Qabas*, Jan. 28, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 30, 1986, pp. C/1–3.

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Some of the foreign residents evacuated from Aden during the January 1986 coup in South Yemen debark from the Soviet cargo ship Skulptor Gulubkin *in Djibouti on January 19.*

–Patrick Chauvel/SYGMA.

Further evidence of the Soviets' initial confusion and vacillation, and of their eventual policy reversal, can be found in a close reading of their public statements during the crisis.[31] During the entire first week of fighting in South Yemen, Soviet media were more than usually cautious in their public statements about the unsettled situation there. Very little appeared in print, and Soviet radio and television generally refrained from commentary and simply repeated brief, ostensibly factual accounts from local sources. Even so, the selective nature of Soviet reportage during this first phase of South Yemen's crisis offers some insight into Moscow's initial reactions. For example, Soviet radio very quickly (late on the first day of fighting in Aden) repeated the Ali Nasir regime's claim to have foiled a "counterrevolutionary" coup; and, over the next three days, Soviet media held back news about the large-scale combat under way in the PDRY capital. As late as January 16, in another indication that Moscow still supported Ali Nasir, a Soviet television commentary referred to his opponents as "putschists."[32]

Late that day, however, as an emergency PDRY delegation arrived in Moscow and fighting intensified in Aden, Soviet reportage shifted to a more neutral posture, noting vaguely that the situation in Aden was still "tense" or "complex" and that there were "conflicting accounts" about the fate of individual figures. Neither Ali Nasir nor his rivals were mentioned by name, and TASS reports carefully avoided taking sides in the ongoing South Yemeni power struggle.[33] Still, the failure to acknowledge the incumbent leader whom Moscow had until just then supported, and the emphasis on South Yemen's party at the expense of

[31]The account that follows is based on published translations of Soviet print and broadcast coverage of South Yemeni events, appearing in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union/International Affairs* (Washington, DC—hereafter *FBIS-SOV*), "Middle East and North Africa" section, various daily editions for the period Jan. 14–28, 1986; and on translations of Arab and Western coverage appearing in *FBIS-MEA*, section on "The Arabian Peninsula," over the same period, esp. Jan. 23 and 24. Specific reports will be cited as appropriate.

[32]See esp. Moscow radio, Jan. 15, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 16, 1986, p. H/2; and Soviet radio and television reports, Jan. 16, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 21, 1986, pp. H/2–5.

[33]See, e.g., *Pravda*, Jan. 19, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 21, 1986, pp. H/3–4; and the various Soviet broadcasts on Jan. 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 21, pp. H/2–5, and Jan. 22, 1986, p. H/1.

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individual political figures, marked a shift no less dramatic for being implicit. While it is hard to say whether this shift in Soviet coverage reflected a change in Moscow's perceptions or in its preferences (or, more likely, some combination of the two), it does suggest that the Soviets had already decided to keep their options open, and perhaps to broker a compromise between the rival factions, rather than to back Ali Nasir's bid to retain supreme power.

All during the following week, a new theme was added to Soviet print as well as broadcast media treatment of South Yemen: the crisis there was termed "purely an internal affair," in which "any form of outside interference" was "impermissible." This stance was publicly attributed to both Soviet and South Yemeni authorities.[34] Since the most likely form of such "outside interference" would have been North Yemeni intervention on Ali Nasir's behalf, the Soviet warning was tantamount to indirect support for the rebels. "The Soviet Union stood by us," in the words of Salim Salih Muhammad, the new assistant secretary general of the [South] Yemen Socialist Party, "in halting any foreign intervention."[35] By that time, it appears, Soviet officials were already engaged in intensive consultations aimed at ending the battle by finding a suitable successor to the beleaguered South Yemeni leader.

Of course, with most of Ali Nasir's leading rivals now dead (or, as seems to have been true of Isma'il, gravely wounded),[36] the list of possible replacements had considerably narrowed. The choice therefore rather fortuitously fell on a heretofore marginal player, Haydar Abu Bakr Al-Attas. He had survived the massacre and subsequent carnage simply by virtue of being out of the country, on an official visit to India en route to China, at the time. After secluding himself in his New Delhi hotel to receive reports and ride out the storm, Al-Attas had the foresight to fly on to Moscow instead of Beijing (along with Foreign Minister Abd Al-Aziz Al-Dali) for unscheduled crisis consultations.[37] A technocrat by training, and a more or less neutral figure in Aden's endemic intrigues, Al-Attas had held the prestigious but practically powerless post of prime minister; now he was suddenly the right man in the right place at the right time to take over South Yemen's presidency. He was alive and well; his lack of clear-cut factional identification had abruptly been converted into an asset, making him an acceptable compromise candidate; and he was particularly well placed, from his temporary but well-timed vantage point in Moscow, to return to Aden in triumph.[38] It is thus no accident that one veteran exiled South Yemeni opposition figure labeled Al-Attas "an Adeni Karmal," in a bitter allusion to the Afghan communist who enjoyed a similarly meteoric rise to power when the Soviets intervened in that country in December 1979.[39]

Thus, during the week of heavy fighting in and around Aden, the Soviets had recovered from their initial uncertainty and disorientation, shifting rather quickly from pro–Ali Nasir partisanship to what can best be described as increasingly anti–Ali Nasir "neutrality." Apparently, Moscow had at first held on to some vestiges of hope that the conflict could still be mediated, either by the Soviets themselves or through the good offices of some other friendly third party such as Libya or one of the various Palestinian factions. But when the ever more confident South Yemeni rebels rejected such mediation (let alone power-sharing or compromise with Ali Nasir), the Soviets decided to support the new claimants to power—flying in (on January 24) a new leadership team headed by Al-Attas directly from Moscow and expressly for this purpose.[40]

The turning point toward Moscow's abandonment of Ali Nasir appears to have come a few days earlier, around January 19 or 20. It was then that the Soviets publicly warned against the very outside mediation that they themselves had previously encouraged; and it was then that they appear to have finally rejected a desperate bid by the fugitive Ali Nasir to journey to

[34]TASS reports, Jan. 20, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 21, 1986, p. H/5–6; Moscow radio, citing a Soviet foreign ministry spokesman, Jan. 21, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 22, 1986, p. H/1; TASS report, Jan. 24, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 27, 1986, p. H/1; *Pravda*, Jan. 21 and 24, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 23, 1986, p. H/1, and Jan. 24,1986, p. H/4; TASS report, Jan. 25, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 27, 1986, pp. H /1–2. See, in addition to the Soviets' own broadcasts, those by rebel leaders on Jan. 19, 24, and 27, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 21, 1986, p. C/5; Jan. 27, 1986, pp. C/8–9; and Jan. 28, 1986, pp. C/2–5.

[35]Interview in *Al-Siyasah*, Feb. 15, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 19, 1986, pp. C/6–7.

[36]See esp. *Al-Ittihad*, Jan. 29, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 30, 1986, p. C/ 6.

[37]Soviet media initially broadcast only a perfunctory report of Al-Attas's reception by Politburo member Geydar Aliyev; TASS report, Jan. 16, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 17, 1986, p. H/1. On January 19, *Pravda* reported that Al-Attas and the accompanying PDRY foreign minister, Abd Al-Aziz Al-Dali, had met with CPSU Central Committee secretaries Yegor Ligachëv and Boris Ponomarëv two days earlier; trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 21, 1986, pp. H/3–4. A later report mentioned another such meeting, held on Jan. 23; see TASS report, Jan. 24, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 27, 1986, p. H /1.

[38]See, e.g., *Al-Qabas*, Jan. 28, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 30, 1986, p. C/1; interview with French ambassador Audebert, loc. cit.

[39]Interview with Muhammad Ali Haytham in *Al-Watan Al-Arabi*, Feb. 14–20, 1986, pp. 32–33. See also his interview in *Le Monde*, Feb. 7, 1986; and the intriguing but clearly sensationalized account in *Jeune Afrique* (Paris), Feb. 5, 1986.

[40]For an interesting analysis of Soviet options in this early phase of the crisis, see *Al-Bayadir Al-Siyasi* (Jerusalem), Jan. 18, 1986, pp. 10-11. See also the report about internal opposition to the new leadership, as carried on Manama radio, Jan. 27, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 28, 1986, p. C/6.

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Moscow for consultations.[41] And it was then, judging from the best available evidence, that the Soviets began to intervene directly in favor of the forces opposed to Ali Nasir.

Soviet Intervention

While difficult to document conclusively, an account of Soviet intervention can be reconstructed from published sources, both Arab and Western, with due allowance for possible selectivity, bias, or outright fabrication.[42] Several days into the fighting, Soviet assistance for the rebels was confined to provision of offshore transmission-boosting equipment for their radio broadcasts, as each side in South Yemen's civil war struggled to win the vital "battle of the airwaves." A week or so later, however, as Ali Nasir remained on the run, the Soviets apparently began providing the rebels with some intelligence and logistical support, and ultimately also with limited but useful tactical combat assistance. Reliable accounts in both Arab and Western publications refer to Soviet as well as Cuban participation in directing the insurgents' artillery fire, supplying them with ammunition and other materiel, and even bombing Aden's airport runways in order to neutralize the country's largely pro–Ali Nasir air force. This activity appears to have reached a crescendo around January 24, as Ali Nasir's replacements arrived from Moscow while rebel forces consolidated their control over the capital. The following day, Moscow radio declared that "the situation in Aden is gradually returning to normal," and that "fighting there has ceased completely."[43]

Whether or not this Soviet involvement actually tipped the military balance against Ali Nasir is a moot and also an unanswerable question. According to one report, Soviet aid did in fact shift the seesaw battle back in favor of the rebels just as they were beginning to run out of ammunition.[44] More likely it merely hastened a rebel victory already in the making, which in turn helps to explain when and why the Soviets intervened as they did. Thus, in a pattern reminiscent of their behavior in other Arab crises, the Soviets appear to have escalated their direct intervention just when the conflict was ending, as the confusion of battle and the risks of larger-scale confrontation abated. In this instance, though, the participation of Soviet troops even in limited combat rather than merely front-line advisory roles marked an unusual—if perhaps not entirely unprecedented—departure from normal Soviet practice in the Arab arena over the past 15 years.

Official Western comment about this new element in the picture was fairly cautious. A week into the fighting, US officials publicly claimed they had no proof that the Soviet Union was directly involved; a bit later, however, they pointed to "a credible pattern of increasing and significant Soviet support for the rebel group," while conceding that the relevant reports remained "scattered and unconfirmed."[45] By January 23, in a clear signal that those reports were being taken seriously, State Department officials told reporters that American diplomats had urged their Soviet counterparts not to intervene in Aden.[46] Meanwhile, the French ambassador to Aden, an eyewitness to the fighting until he joined the mass evacuation of foreigners from the capital, dropped an unmistakable public hint about Moscow's involvement. Alluding to claims by the Soviets that all the crates they delivered to Aden harbor during the battles there were "medical supplies," he simply said, "I doubt it."[47]

Soviet spokesmen predictably disavowed any military role in this crisis, while warning others to keep out. One anonymous *Pravda* "rejoinder" rejected Ameri-

[41] See the suggestive reports on Kuwait radio, Jan. 16 and 17, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 16, 1986, p. C/4, and Jan. 17, 1986, pp. C/2–3; Sanaa radio, Jan.19, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 21, 1986, p. C/17; various Arab and French print and radio reports on Jan. 21–24, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 24, 1986, pp. H/1–4 ; Radio AFP and Radio Monte Carlo, Jan. 24, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 24, 1986 , p. H/1; Ali Nasir interviews in *Al-Majallah*, Jan. 28–Feb. 4, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 5, 1986, pp. C/2–3; and in *Al-Ittihad Al-Usbu'i*, Feb. 13, 1986, pp. 10–11, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 14, 1986, pp. C/4–9. See also reports on Radio Monte Carlo, Jan. 23, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 24, 1986, p. A/11; *Arab Times*, Jan. 26, 1986, in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 28, 1986, p. C/1; *Jane's Defence Weekly* (London), Feb. 15, 1986; and *Le Monde*, Feb. 7, 1986.

[42] *Al-Siyasah*, Jan. 20, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 22, 1986, p. C/ 2; Radio Monte Carlo and FBIS Editorial Report, in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 23, 1986, pp. C/6–7; *The New York Times*, Jan. 24, 1986; *The Wall Street Journal* (New York), Apr. 15, 1986; *Al-Khalij*, Jan. 26, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 27, 1986, p. C/7; Abu Dhabi radio, citing commentary in the local paper *Al-Wahdah*, Jan. 29, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 29, 1986, pp. C/11–12; *Al-Ittihad*, Jan. 31, 1986, trans. in *FBIS–MEA*, Feb. 3, 1986, p. C/6; *Al-Qabas*, Jan. 28 and Feb. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 30, 1986, pp. C/1–3, and Feb. 10, 1986, p. C/2; *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Feb. 8 and 15, 1986.

[43] TASS report, Jan. 25, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 27, 1986, pp. H/1–2. For several days thereafter, however, Soviet broadcasts noted that the situation was still being "stabilized"; TASS reports, Jan. 28 and 29, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 29, 1986, p. H/1; and Jan. 30, 1986, p. H/1. Even after another month had gone by, an authoritative Soviet report conceded that "the process of normalization continues in Democratic Yemen" (*Pravda*, Feb. 25, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 26, 1986, p. H/2).

[44] *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Feb. 15, 1986. See also the curious TASS report on Jan. 21, 1986, that "the opposing factions are experiencing a certain exhaustion of military opportunities" (trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 22, 1986, p. H/1).

[45] *The New York Times*, Jan. 22, 1986; State Department press briefing, Feb. 6, 1986.

[46] *The New York Times*, Jan. 24, 1986.

[47] Interview on Paris radio, Jan. 27, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 28, 1986, p. C/8.

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can charges as "mythical."[48] Similar rebuttals continued to appear long after the entire episode had largely disappeared from the Western press, suggesting some sensitivity about this issue. For example, an intriguing commentary broadcast in early February on Radio Baku in Azeri, and apparently directed at listeners across the border in Iran, responded to the "uncritical" treatment in an Iranian newspaper of "fabrications" concerning Soviet intervention in the internal affairs of a fellow Muslim society. The broadcast denied what it called the "propaganda clamor about Moscow's, God forbid, conspiracies in various parts of the world and the legend of the communist threat."[49] As for the South Yemenis themselves, spokesmen for both rival factions denied reports of Soviet interference in their battles.[50] But South Yemeni sources, according to one curious report in the Arab press, admitted that some people might have "mistakenly" attributed unidentified wartime flights over Aden to Soviet forces—when in fact, those sources claimed, the mystery pilots were actually Israelis![51]

Soviet Comments on the Crisis

Almost as interesting as the actual Soviet role during the January battles has been the published Soviet commentary about South Yemen once the immediate crisis subsided. By January 31, the Moscow media were already engaged in rewriting recent history. *Pravda*, ignoring the earlier erroneous Soviet reports of Ali Nasir's victory during the first four days of fighting, now recalled that

> *immediately after the tragic events in Aden of 13 January, the majority of news organs throughout the world . . . noted the clear-cut position of the Soviet Union which called for an end to the armed clashes and the reconciliation of the sides, and resolutely opposed any outside interference.*[52]

The new South Yemeni president, *Pravda*'s subtle distortion of the record continued, was being falsely labeled "Moscow's pointman—and this merely because at the time of the events of 13 January, when he happened to be out of the country, he was in Moscow on his way home."

Since early February, however, Soviet coverage of South Yemen has reverted to its normal scope. What little there is has emphasized the return to normalcy in that country in the security, economic, and political spheres, including the "proper" selection of new leaders, the continuity of policies, and the lasting friendship with Moscow.[53] The freshly installed South Yemeni leaders who attended the 27th CPSU Congress in Moscow in February-March were accorded strictly routine media treatment: the Soviet press ignored their reported meeting with Mikhail Gorbachëv and their extraordinarily open press conference (on which more below) at the South Yemeni embassy.[54]

Soviet statements about South Yemen to Arab or West European media outlets have been only slightly more forthcoming, going so far as to admit surprise and to express regret and concern over the "tragic" events there. Interestingly, while endorsing the general argument that only "imperialism and reaction" could have benefited from the crisis, the Soviets have for the most part not echoed South Yemen's own occasional accusations of CIA or Israeli Mossad intervention in that country.[55] Nor have the Soviet media repeated the

[48] *Pravda*, Jan. 31, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 4, 1986, pp. A/4–5. See also Kuwait radio, Jan. 16, 1986 (quoting Soviet Deputy Defense Minister Vladimir Govorov, who was visiting Kuwait at the time), trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 16, 1986, p. C/1; and Kuwait radio, citing a local Soviet diplomat, Jan. 25, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 27, 1986, p. H/3.

[49] Trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 7, 1986, p. H/4. See also TASS report on Moscow radio, Feb. 21, 1986, in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 25, 1986, p. CC/9; *Pravda*, Apr. 26, 1986, and TASS version of the article "Slanderers At Work," in *FBIS-SOV*, Apr. 29, 1986, p. A /10; and May 1, 1986, pp. H/3–4.

[50] Aden radio, Apr. 20, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Apr. 21, 1986, p. C/2 (repeated by TASS, Apr. 21, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Apr. 22, 1986, p. H/3); Manama radio, Jan. 29, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 29, 1986, p. C/8; Abu Dhabi radio, Feb. 9, 1986, citing Ali Nasir statement to the local paper *Al-Ittihad*, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 11, 1986, p. C/8.

[51] *Al-Ray Al-Amm* (Kuwait), Feb. 4, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 5, 1986, p. C/6. See eyewitness account in *The New York Times*, Jan. 22, 1986.

[52] *Pravda*, Jan. 31, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 4, 1986, pp. A/4-5 (translation very slightly altered for clarity). Another Soviet account notes simply that Attas "was on an Asian tour when the tragic events occurred and returned home from Delhi via Moscow" (see A. Ulanskiy, "The January Crisis," *New Times* [Moscow], No. 6, Feb. 17, 1986, p. 10, in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 5, 1986, pp. H/1–2).

[53] See, e.g., TASS reports, Jan. 31, Feb. 1, 7 and 12, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 3, 1986, p. H/3; Feb. 5, 1986, p. H/2; Feb. 10, 1986, p. H/2; and Feb. 13, 1986, p. H/1; *Izvestiya* (Moscow), Feb. 20, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 21, 1986, p. H/5; TASS report, Feb. 21, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 26, 1986, p. CC/16; *Pravda*, Feb. 9 and 25, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 10, 1986, p. H/2, and Feb. 26, 1986, p. H/2.

[54] Soviet media seem to have reported only a meeting of the PDRY delegation with Ligachëv and Aliyev; *Pravda*, Mar. 4, 1986. Compare Al-Bayd's homecoming statement on Aden radio, Mar. 8, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 10, 1986, p. C/3; and his interview in *Al-Anba'*, Mar. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 10, 1986, pp. C/3–4.

[55] One exception is a commentary by Pavel Demchenko, which attributed South Yemen's "difficulties" both to its "traditional heterogeneity and tribal fragmentation" and to "subversive actions by foreign reactionary and imperialist forces" (*Pravda*, Jan. 24, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 24, 1986, p. H/4). Also, Konstantin Geyvandov, a "senior political commentator for *Izvestiya*," was reported to have told a Jordanian reporter that "recent events in the PDRY" were "part of US and Israeli attempts to create problems in the Arab arena" (*Sawt Al-Sha'b* [Amman], Jan. 26, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 31, 1986, pp. H/3–4). For allegations by the new South Yemeni leaders of outside interference in the January crisis, see, e.g., Aden radio, Feb. 7 and 8, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 10, 1986, pp. C/6–10; Aden radio, Feb. 10, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 11, 1986, (cont. p. 61)

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The delegation of the Yemen Socialist Party, headed by Secretary General Ali Salim Al-Bayd, in Moscow for the 27th CPSU Congress, places a wreath at the Lenin Mausoleum.

–TASS from SOVFOTO.

public and very personal South Yemeni charges leveled against the defeated Ali Nasir; instead, as will be seen below, the Soviets have simply dropped the former leader from their public vocabulary.

Ali Nasir Abandoned

By the end of January, Ali Nasir's military situation had become hopeless, and he again sought sanctuary in Ethiopia. He had received a sympathetic hearing, but little else, during a tour of friendly Arab capitals (Tripoli, Damascus, and Algiers), all of which were constrained by distance, by limited resources, and above all by an understandable reluctance to get involved in someone else's losing battle against their Soviet patron's apparent wishes. The exiled leader was back in North Yemen and reportedly also in South Yemen, outside of Aden, during February, before fleeing to the Ethiopian capital for the third and last time in early March.[56]

Throughout this period, even as he issued increasingly shrill denunciations of the "crazy separatist clique" that had replaced him in Aden, Ali Nasir continued to appeal, almost pathetically, for Soviet support. He publicized elaborate proposals for power-sharing among all "legitimate" South Yemeni forces,

p. C/4; *Al-Khalij*, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, pp. C/2–4. More recently, the Lebanese leftist newspaper *Al-Safir*, alluding to US Vice President George Bush's expression of "concern" about South Yemen during his visit to North Yemen in March, has accused Washington and Sanaa of jointly plotting to overthrow the new regime in Aden (see *The New York Times*, May 25, 1986). For earlier allegations along these lines, see *Al-Qabas*, Feb. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 6, 1986, pp. C/1–2; and *Al-Ittihad*, Apr. 12, 1986.

[56]Ali Nasir's peregrinations were widely reported in the Kuwaiti and United Arab Emirates press; see also *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* (London), Jan. 21, 1986. For one report of an interview with Ali Nasir "inside South Yemen," published long after his initial escape, see *Al-Siyasah*, Feb. 21, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 24, 1986, pp. C/5–6.

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and denied that the Soviet Union had turned against him—even though his personal envoys were now reportedly rebuffed by Moscow and other Soviet-bloc capitals.[57] Indeed, by early March, according to a number of informed Arab accounts, mediators from the Soviet Union and its allies (including Nayyif Hawatmeh, head of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and Lebanese communist party leaders) would no longer hear of Ali Nasir's return to Aden in any capacity; the best deal they were willing to contemplate was for him to accept exile in exchange for the political rehabilitation of his supporters.[58]

By this time, even Ali Nasir could probably see the handwriting on the wall; and so he reportedly stood firm (with the stubborn support of Ethiopian leader Mengistu Haile Mariam) in rejecting the suspect Soviet offer to take up residence in Moscow.[59] As for the diehard partisans of the former South Yemeni leader, they appear to lack the leadership, motivation, access to Aden, outside assistance, and sheer numbers that would be required to have much immediate effect on the current political situation.

The Rebels in Power

By early February, once it had the military situation fairly well under control, the new regime in Aden turned to the task of sorting out and consolidating the post–Ali Nasir political order. So many of the previous leaders had just been "martyred," and so many others had fled the country, gone into hiding, or been discredited along with Ali Nasir himself, that rudimentary issues of staffing the top government, party, and military positions perforce preoccupied the new elite in Aden.[60] A series of hastily convened "rump" sessions of higher political organs settled some of these issues. Al-Attas was confirmed in his new position as head of state (chairman of the Supreme People's Council Presidium, or, less formally, president); he relinquished the prime ministership to an even less well-known fellow Politburo member, Yasin Sa'id Nu'man. Al-Dali, meanwhile, retained the post of foreign minister in the new Cabinet. As for the party, a new Politburo and a new secretary general, Ali Salim Al-Bayd, were selected. Several weeks later, the regime announced the "martyrdom" of Isma'il, the last surviving leader of the original plot against Ali Nasir.[61]

Behind this official facade of legitimacy, however, none of the nominal new leaders appears to have a secure power base. Al-Attas and Al-Dali are both relatively neutral, nonideological technocrats (the former was trained as an engineer; the latter, as a dentist) acceptable both to diverse South Yemeni factions and to Moscow. Neither figure, however, appears to have outstanding political skills or much political following. Al-Bayd, for his part, may have other handicaps: health problems at present and ideological problems in the past.[62] In fact, the new "strongman" in Aden, judging from published reports about him and from his own prominence in the official Adeni press, appears to be Al-Bayd's freshly installed titular deputy in the party hierarchy, Salim Salih Muhammad.[63] Also, given the still uncertain security situation and the proclivity of South Yemeni factions to resort to arms in settling political scores, the new armed forces and internal security chiefs and their deputies are probably also key players behind the scenes.

Closely related to the question of personalities is that of the political complexion of the new leadership in Aden. For the time being, at least, the extreme radicals are in eclipse. Many of their leaders, as noted, were killed early in the January fighting; some who survived, including North Yemeni opposition leader-in-exile Sultan Ahmed 'Umar, have not been promoted to high positions. Indeed, the new regime is striving to project an image of relative moderation in both foreign and domestic policy. Messages and delegations abroad have consistently (and so far credibly) emphasized South Yemen's continued obeisance to principles of "mutual respect" and "noninterference in internal affairs"—thus attempting to reassure the country's

[57]See, e.g., Ali Nasir interviews in *Al-Ittihad*, Feb. 12, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 13, 1986, pp. C/7–8, and in *Al-Watan Al-Arabi*, Feb. 21–27, 1986, pp. 25-26.

[58]As late as mid-February, Ali Nasir had publicly referred to an (apparently imaginary) *Pravda* article that called for a South Yemeni "national reconciliation," and a subsequent Kuwaiti account repeated that claim; see the reports in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 14, 1986, p. C/7, and Mar. 10, 1986, pp. C/3-4. See below for reports of recent Soviet-backed mediation efforts.

[59]*Al-Jumhuriyah* (Cairo), Feb. 4, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 7, 1986, p. R/1.

[60]Once the new political appointments and purges or detentions discussed below were well under way, the new regime replaced many of the old one's military commanders as well. In April, new chiefs were formally installed for South Yemen's navy, air force, and popular militia, all of which had sided to a considerable degree with Ali Nasir. See Aden radio, Apr. 9, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Apr. 10, 1986, p. C/3.

[61]Aden radio, Feb. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 7, 1986, pp. C/1–3; and Feb. 8 and 10, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 10, 1986, pp. C/3–10.

[62]Al-Bayd, in addition to his other rumored medical problems, may have been wounded slightly during the Politburo massacre. For a reference to his earlier political problems, see Cigar, "State and Society in South Yemen," p. 47. For an interview with Al-Bayd shortly before the coup—in which he remarked prophetically that "today you have power, and yesterday you were on the street"—see *Al-Amal* (Sanaa), Dec. 8, 1986, trans. in *JPRS-NEA*, Mar. 10, 1986, pp. 85–100, esp. p. 99.

[63]See, e.g., *Al-Khalij*, Jan. 26, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 27, 1986, pp. C/5–6; and Jan. 30, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 3, 1986, pp. C/2–3; *The Financial Times* (London), Jan. 30, 1986; Aden radio, Feb. 3, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 3, 1986, p. C/2.

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neighbors that Aden will not revert to a policy of subversion, and to elicit Arab acceptance and financial assistance in return.[64] In the domestic arena, top officials of the new regime have pointedly remarked to both Arab and Soviet audiences that full-fledged communism might be "centuries away" in South Yemen, which would pursue a "*gradual* movement along the path of socialist orientation."[65] Nevertheless, there is little reason to believe that tensions over the proper degree of radicalism have disappeared. They may well resurface once the new South Yemeni regime copes with its most urgent internal and external security concerns.

Of equal significance is the lopsided regional and tribal composition of the new Politburo. It is about evenly divided between "rebel" Lahijis and "neutral" Hadramis; but conspicuous by their absence are members from Abyan, Ali Nasir's home province, or from Aden itself. Questioned about this deficiency, one of the new leaders retorted rather defensively that the party was not a parliament and therefore did not need to be representative.[66] But the persistence of unresolved personal, ideological, and tribal issues surrounding the South Yemeni leadership suggests that a new power struggle may not be too far away.[67]

In the meantime, the new regime appears to have its hands full just keeping track of suspected partisans of Ali Nasir. One official did not contradict a suggestion that 10,000 such suspects had been arrested; while another spokesman claimed that, as of mid-February, about a thousand of them had already been released.[68] More recently, on March 29, South Yemen announced a general amnesty for all except the ringleaders of Ali Nasir's camp, including refugees.[69] (The latter, according to other reports, may number as many as 18,000, some of whom are still organized in quasi-military formations.)[70] As for the ousted President himself, however, his return has been ruled out by his replacements in Aden, who have lately even talked of trying him in absentia.[71] Significantly, Al-Bayd denounced Ali Nasir by name in a speech to the Soviet party congress in Moscow in March, and again in a speech to the East German party congress the following month.[72] Moreover, in an extraordinary press conference at the South Yemeni embassy in the Soviet capital, he publicly dismissed reports that the Soviets had urged Aden to effect a "national reconciliation" with the "criminal" former leader.[73]

The new government's effort to isolate Ali Nasir and consolidate its own power at home is also the primary basis for its approach to foreign policy. First and foremost, Aden's leaders have sought to assure themselves of continued Soviet diplomatic, political, economic, and military backing by stressing their loyalty and gratitude to Moscow at every opportunity. Frequent consultations with Soviet-bloc ambassadors and various visiting delegations in Aden have been the hallmark of the post–Ali Nasir leaders. Their statements to date lack most (although, as we shall see, not all) of the earlier nuances that suggested even minor policy differences between Aden and Moscow, or any differences within the South Yemeni regime regarding the "strategic" and "vital" nature of bilateral ties.[74]

At the same time, the new regime has sought to preempt the prospect of Arab support for Ali Nasir or other dissident forces by stressing, as already noted, its own continued adherence to his regional "good neighbor" policy. In this connection, South Yemeni spokesmen have gone so far as to gloss over all the evidence of initial Ethiopian or North Yemeni (and other Arab) support for the deposed President. They have also quite openly solicited Arab aid for their economy, already woefully poor and mismanaged and now further ravaged by civil war.[75] For a while, too, the selec-

[64]See especially the surprisingly frank interviews with Al-Attas and Al-Bayd in *Al-Nahar* (Beirut), Feb. 14, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 19, 1986, pp. C/4–6. For a more concise example of the many recent official statements along these lines, see Al-Dali interview in *Al-Siyasah*, Feb. 12, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 14, 1986, pp. C/2–3.

[65]Interview with Salim Salih Muhammad in *Al-Siyasah*, Feb. 15, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 19, 1986, p. C/6; text of Al-Bayd's speech to the CPSU Party Congress, *Pravda*, Mar. 6, 1986 (emphasis added).

[66]Al-Bayd interview in *Al-Nahar*, Feb. 14, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 19, 1986, pp. C/4–5.

[67]See, e.g., Marc Yared, "South Yemen: Marxism or Ethnic Solidarity?" *Jeune Afrique*, Feb. 26, 1986.

[68]Al-Attas interview in *Al-Mustaqbal*, Feb. 22, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 24, 1986, p. C/5; *Al-Ray Al-Amm*, Mar. 18, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 20, 1986, p. C/2; Doha radio, citing statement by Al-Attas to *Al-Ittihad*, Mar. 19, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 20, 1986, p. C/2.

[69]Aden radio, Mar. 29 and 30, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 31, 1986, pp. C/3–4.

[70]*Al-Ittihad*, May 4, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, May 5, 1986, p. C/7; *Al-Khalij*, May 22, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, May 23, 1986, p. C/1.

[71]*FBIS-MEA*, June 4, 1986, pp. C/2-3. An unconfirmed Arab report claims that two prominent partisans of Ali Nasir have already been sent into Soviet exile; see Abu Dhabi radio citing the local newspaper *Al-Ittihad*, Apr. 27, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Apr. 30, 1986, p. H/3.

[72]*Pravda*, Mar. 6, 1986. Based on Al-Bayd's departure date of Feb. 14, 1986, reported on Aden radio, it appears that he stayed three full weeks in Moscow on that occasion; see *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 18, p. C/3. The Secretary General also attended the Bulgarian Party Congress in April in Sofia (see *14 Uktubar*, Apr. 1, 1986).

[73]Aden radio, Mar. 5, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 7, 1986, p. C/2. The Soviet media, not surprisingly, completely ignored this decidedly unconventional press conference in their capital.

[74]Examples of such meetings and statements are legion; see the frequent reports on Aden radio, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, various daily editions, Jan. 24, 1986, to date.

[75]See, e.g., the official statements broadcast on Aden radio, Jan. 31, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 31, 1986, pp. C/1–2; and Feb. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 7, 1986, pp. C/1–3; Al-Attas interview in *Al-Siyasah*, Feb. 13, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 18, 1986, p. C/1.

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tively "open door" approach begun under Ali Nasir was explicitly extended by his successors to additional Western and possibly even American economic and diplomatic ties. But lately, perhaps with an eye on Moscow, the new regime appears to have backtracked on this a bit; for example, it sounded an especially strident note in the Arab chorus of condemnation of the US air raid on Libya.[76] On this issue, there may be some divergence of views in Aden: Al-Attas, who is reported to enjoy business connections with Saudi interests, has sounded rather more enthusiastic about such economic linkages (and less inclined to cite foreign "reactionary" or "imperialist" plots against South Yemen) than has the outspoken Salim Salih Muhammad.[77]

Regional Repercussions

The long-term implications of the latest South Yemeni upheaval are, like everything in the Middle East, uncertain, but some actual or potential repercussions are already apparent. A quick survey can hardly do them justice. Nevertheless, it may be useful to outline them here, particularly as they may affect the larger picture of Soviet policy in the region.

Among the interested nearby observers of this year's turmoil in South Yemen, the one of greatest potential importance is the Yemen Arab Republic, or North Yemen. It shares with the South not just a border but also a large measure of tribal affiliation, intellectual community, formal commitment to Yemeni unity, primary dependence on Soviet weapons, and, most important of all, a recent history of close but often hostile contacts across the common frontier. North Yemen's president was assassinated by an envoy from the South in 1978; and there were serious border skirmishes in 1972 and again in 1979, ending each time, in typically paradoxical inter-Arab fashion, in agreements on eventual unity between the northern and southern halves of "the Yemeni homeland." The last major crisis between the two countries—sparked by another flare-up in Sanaa's war against the National Democratic Front, a radical opposition guerrilla group based in Aden—was peacefully resolved in 1982. But underlying tensions remained; and Ali Nasir's commitment to peaceful inter-Yemeni relations was not shared by some of his political rivals. As a result, Sanaa could only view the armed challenge to Ali Nasir's leadership in Aden as a matter of grave concern, all the more so because of suspicions of Soviet involvement and temptations for some North Yemeni elements to respond. At the same time, Sanaa was leery of letting this crisis roil its own cordial relations with Moscow, which had continued to provide it with arms and on occasion with discreet diplomatic support throughout the vicissitudes of inter-Yemeni affairs.

Thus, when large-scale fighting suddenly erupted in Aden, the North Yemeni government of President Ali Abdallah Salih reacted cautiously. Over the next few weeks, according to several reliable press reports, Sanaa and Moscow exchanged a number of high-level delegations and messages warning each other against intervention in Aden, each side apparently not quite believing the other's protestations of innocence.[78] In fact, North Yemen's sympathies were clearly with Ali Nasir. On January 16, as the rebels began to turn the tide, Sanaa announced the arrival of a "loyalist" minister from Aden; and over the next few days, President Salih kept in close contact with various like-minded Arab leaders in a vain attempt to end the rebellion by arranging a cease-fire in Aden. The North Yemenis were then reported to have welcomed the fallen South Yemeni President himself to their capital, arranged to fly him to Ethiopia for urgent talks with that country's ruler, and even allowed Ali Nasir back into the border area between the two Yemens as fighting in the South continued.[79]

As late as January 23, even as the rebels were consolidating their control in Aden, Sanaa's official

[76]For early reports of a possible South Yemeni opening to the West, see, e.g., *The New York Times*, Feb. 1, 1986; Salim Salih Muhammad interview in *Al-Anba'*, Feb. 8, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 10, 1986, pp. C/9–10; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Feb. 25 and Mar. 12, 1986; and *14 Uktubar*, Apr. 1, 1986. For examples of more recent hostile South Yemeni media treatment, especially of the US, see, e.g., *14 Uktubar*, Apr. 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14, and 15, 1986; Aden radio, Apr. 8, 1986, trans in *FBIS-MEA*, Apr. 9, 1986, pp. C/4–5; Aden radio, Apr. 15, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Apr. 15, 1986, pp. C/2–3; Aden radio, Apr. 16, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Apr. 16, 1986, pp. C/4–5; Apr. 17, 1986, pp. C/2–3, and Apr. 18, 1986, p. C/4; Aden radio, Apr. 18, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Apr. 21, 1986, p. C/2; Aden radio, Apr. 22, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Apr. 22, 1986, p. C/2.

[77]See, e.g., the somewhat different tones on this issue adopted by the two leaders in separate Aden radio broadcasts on Jan. 31 and Feb. 3, 1986, both trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 3, 1986, p. C/2; also *The Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 11, 1986.

[78]Radio Monte Carlo, Jan. 17, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 17, 1986, p. C/4; *Arab Times*, Jan. 26, 1986, in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 28, 1986, p. C/1; *Al-Khalij*, Jan. 27, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, p. C/7; Abu Dhabi radio, Jan. 28, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, p. C/9; and Sanaa radio, Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 3, 1986, pp. C/7–8, for reference to an exchange of messages between Salih and Gorbachëv. North Yemeni broadcasts on Jan. 14 and 25 and Feb. 3 also referred to unspecified contacts with Moscow; see *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 15, 1986, p. C/12; Jan. 28, 1986, p. C/10; and Feb. 4, 1986, pp. C/6–7.

[79]See, e.g., *Al-Khalij*, Jan. 20, 21, 25, 26, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 21, 1986, p. C/2; Jan. 22, 1986, p. C/1; Jan. 27, 1986, pp. C/8–9, 13. For an early report on North Yemeni–PLO attempts to arrange a cease-fire in Aden, see *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, Jan. 19, 1986.

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radio pointedly declared support for "legitimacy" (i.e., Ali Nasir's government) in "the southern part of the homeland."[80] Even after the next day's rump session of South Yemen's ruling bodies formally replaced the fugitive leader, North Yemeni diplomats reportedly continued to object, at least in private, to the "illegitimate" nature of those proceedings.[81] A month later, in one of the few recent official statements on the matter, North Yemen's prime minister still avoided explicit recognition of the new regime in Aden, while taking pains to pledge continued *peaceful* steps toward unification of the two states.[82] The low-level contacts between them reported by other Arab media outlets were at first not publicized by Sanaa;[83] so far, at least, North Yemen has not reciprocated the effusively conciliatory statements coming from the South.[84] Clearly, the North Yemenis are in no rush to embrace the new regime in Aden, concerned as they undoubtedly are about its latent hostility and about the Soviet role in helping bring it to power in the first place.

But neither has the North tried to intervene directly in the South's unsettled affairs. The absence of sufficient support (either inside or outside South Yemen) for such a risky initiative helps explain this caution; but it also owes much to Sanaa's sensitivity about Soviet concerns. Probably the most that Sanaa will attempt—except in the unlikely event that Moscow voices strong objections—is quiet encouragement for Aden to rehabilitate some of Ali Nasir's supporters and maintain his relatively moderate foreign policy line.[85]

As for bilateral Soviet–North Yemeni ties, they were strained by these events. Routine economic and cultural exchanges and agreements have continued, but

South Yemen President Ali Nasir Muhammad, left, with Ethiopian leader Mengistu Haile Mariam in Aden in autumn 1984.

–*Al Thawri* (Aden), Dec. 1, 1984.

for a while, to cite one symbolic expression of such strains, these contacts were featured more prominently in Soviet than in North Yemeni media.[86] By mid-March, however, the North Yemeni president publicly voiced "great satisfaction" with "a message from the Soviet leadership."[87] Indeed, this crisis is hardly likely to produce a drastic realignment of North Yemen's carefully balanced foreign policy. Whatever bitterness North Yemenis may harbor about the outcome, they cannot now afford to alienate the Soviet Union too much—precisely because they must look to it to help restrain the newly unstable South. Thus the Soviets have once again managed to straddle this obscure but explosive regional conflict with only minor damage to their interests on both sides, at least for now.

Aside from North Yemen, the other regional bystanders to the crisis in South Yemen can be roughly divided into pro-Soviet and pro-Western camps; each exhibited interesting reactions to events in Aden. In the former camp are, first of all, South Yemen's two partners in a 1981 mutual security treaty: Ethiopia and Libya. The avowedly Marxist and reflexively pro-Soviet regime led by Mengistu Haile Mariam in Ethiopia adopted an atypically independent posture toward the conflict in Aden, offering support for Ali Nasir for some

[80]Sanaa radio, Jan. 16, 18, 20, 23, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 17, 1986, p. C/4, Jan. 21, 1986, pp. C/16–18, and Jan. 24, 1986, p. C/9; Kuwait radio, Jan. 18, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 21, 1986, p. C/4.

[81]Abu Dhabi radio, citing report in *Al-Ittihad*, Jan. 25, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 27, 1986, p. C/5; *Al-Khalij*, Jan. 26, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, p. C/8.

[82]Sanaa radio, Feb. 25, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 26, 1986, p. C/4. See also *Al-Khalij*, Jan. 28, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 29, 1986, p. C/9; Sanaa radio, Feb. 3, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 4, 1986, p. C/7.

[83]See, e.g., *Al-Siyasah*, Feb. 19, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 20, 1986, p. C/4; Aden radio, Mar. 8, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 10, 1986, p. C/6. In fact, several weeks after the new PDRY regime was in place, a North Yemeni diplomat was still quoted as denying that his government had contacts with anyone but "the legitimate leadership under President Ali Nasir"; Manama radio, Feb. 4, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 5, 1986, p. C/7. See also *Al-Ittihad*, Mar. 17, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 18, 1986, p. C/2.

[84]See, e.g., *Khaleej Times*, Jan. 30, 1986, in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 31, 1986, pp. C/5–6; Al-Attas press conference reported by Aden radio, Jan. 31, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 3, 1986, p. C/1; *Al-Watan* (Kuwait), Feb. 23, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 25, 1986, pp. C/1–2; Al-Dali interview in *Al-Khalij*, Mar. 13, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 14, 1986, p. C/4; *14 Uktubar*, Apr. 2 and 4, 1986.

[85]See, e.g., *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Feb. 8, 1986.

[86]Compare, for example, the Soviet and North Yemeni accounts of a trade delegation to Moscow on Jan. 28, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Jan. 29, 1986, pp. H/1–2.

[87]Sanaa radio, Mar. 15, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 18, 1986, p. H/1. For background on Soviet relations with North Yemen, see Mark N. Katz, "Sanaa and the Soviets," *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1984, pp. 21–34.

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time after the Soviets had switched sides. Mengistu's motives are a bit mysterious. He may have harbored some gratitude toward the deposed South Yemeni leader for helping Ethiopia against Somalia, despite some internal opposition, during the 1977–78 Ogaden war; he may have felt some empathy for a friendly fellow leader faced with violent domestic challenges; he may have distrusted some of Ali Nasir's rivals; or he may simply have decided to set a precedent of support for an incumbent ruler. In any case, Mengistu welcomed the fugitive Ali Nasir and his entire political entourage to the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, a short flight across the Bab Al-Mandab straits from Aden. Mengistu then apparently tried to reconcile the increasingly successful rebels with what was practically a rival government-in-exile (plus a good part of South Yemen's modest navy, which had also defected to Ethiopia). Indeed, the official Ethiopian media kept supporting Ali Nasir for at least a week after his formal removal from office by the new authorities in Aden.[88]

The effect of all this, not surprisingly, was to create serious frictions in Ethiopia's relations with both the Soviet Union and South Yemen. In early February, Mengistu reportedly personally stood up to Soviet demands for Ali Nasir's "extradition" to Moscow; a month later, when Ethiopia's leader met his new South Yemeni counterparts at the party congress in the Soviet capital, a heated argument reportedly developed.[89]

Nevertheless, even if Ali Nasir retains political asylum in Addis, Mengistu will probably have little choice but to accept the new fait accompli in Aden. By mid-February, South Yemen publicized the arrival of Ethiopian "humanitarian" assistance. By mid-March, official PDRY spokesmen, who had earlier tended to deny or dismiss rumors of bilateral differences, more confidently allowed that even though Ethiopia's government had "once sympathized with the former chairman," its relations with Aden had already "begun to improve"—a fairly believable indication, precisely because of its modesty, that indeed they had.[90] More recently, an official representative of the new regime was publicly received in the Ethiopian capital.[91] And as for Ethiopia's relations with Moscow, there is no sign that this intense but ephemeral and narrowly focused disagreement has had a major adverse effect, nor is there any reason to anticipate that it will.

Libya, the third member of the 1981 tripartite alliance, was further removed ideologically and geographically from South Yemen, and less directly drawn into the recent crisis there. But Libyan leader Mu'ammar Al-Qadhdhafi, like Ethiopia's Mengistu, kept demonstratively in contact with the exiled Ali Nasir and his envoys, and initially offered him at least moral support. Qadhdhafi also offered, in a typically grandiose and futile gesture, to support a Palestinian proposal to mediate between the two warring South Yemeni factions. By late March, however, Tripoli radio publicized a visit by the foreign minister of the new Adeni regime.[92] In fact, as compared with Ethiopia's involvement, Libya's interest in or leverage over events in Aden has not been as great—especially in the wake of Qadhdhafi's clashes with US forces in March and April. Consequently, the effect of South Yemen's crisis on Libya's links with the Soviet Union has probably been even more marginal than in Ethiopia's case.[93]

Of the handful of other pro-Soviet Arab regimes, Syria merits brief mention here for its especially equivocal reaction to the turmoil in Aden. Syria, while not in South Yemen's tripartite Mideast radical alliance, was a fellow founding member of the "rejectionist" Steadfastness Front formed nearly a decade ago in response to Egyptian President Sadat's "capitulationist" policy toward Israel; and Damascus was another early destination of the itinerant Ali Nasir. But Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad chose to receive envoys from both sides in South Yemen, avoiding a premature commitment to either. The government-controlled Syrian press even publicized messages from loyalist and rebel leaders on the same day, referring to Ali Nasir as the "president" and to Al-Attas as the "president-designate" of the PDRY.[94] Other Syrian statements mainly repeated Soviet warnings against outside interference in Aden.[95]

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[88]Addis Ababa radio, Jan. 21, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 22, 1986, p. C/1; *The Ethiopian Herald* (Addis Ababa), Jan. 22, 1986; Addis Ababa radio, citing the local paper *Serto Ader*, Jan. 30, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 31, 1986, p. R/1; Paris AFP radio, Feb. 1, 1986, and *Al-Ittihad*, Feb. 2, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 3, 1986, p. R/1.

[89]*Al-Anba'*, Mar. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 10, 1986, pp. C/3–4; *Al-Jumhuriyah* (Cairo), Feb. 4, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 7, 1986, p. R/1

[90]Aden radio, Feb. 7, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 10, 1986, p. C/12; *Al-Ittihad*, Mar. 11, 1986, citing statement by PDRY official Ali Ahmad Al-Sallami, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 12, 1986, p. C/2.

[91]See the various reports trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, May 5, 1967, pp. C/6–7; and the YSP Central Committee communiqué of May 29, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, May 30, 1986, pp. C/1–3, esp. p. C/2.

[92]Tripoli radio, Mar. 30, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 31, 1986, p. Q/11. For earlier statements by the new South Yemeni regime about relations with Libya, see Aden radio, Feb. 15, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 18, 1986, p. C/3; and interview with Al-Dali in *Al-Bayan* (Dubai), Mar. 14, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 17, 1986, p. C/7.

[93]For an analysis of Soviet ties with Libya, which have not been as pervasive as those with South Yemen, see Lisa Anderson, "Qadhdhafi and the Kremlin," *Problems of Communism*, September-October 1985, pp. 29-44.

[94]Abu Dhabi radio, citing *Al-Ittihad*, Jan. 23, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 23, 1986, p. C/5; Damascus radio, Feb. 6, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 7, 1986, p. H/1; *Al-Ba'th* (Damascus), Feb. 7, 1986. See also Abu Dhabi radio, citing *Al-Ittihad*, Jan. 23, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 23, 1986, p. C/5.

[95]Damascus radio, Jan. 18, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 21, 1986, p. H/3; Aden radio, Jan. 28, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 29, 1986, p. H/1.

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At the same time, two radical Palestinian factions headquartered in and heavily influenced by Damascus, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), adopted a similarly noncommittal posture. Both enjoyed some respect in Aden, derived from continuing contacts that date back to pre-independence, Arab Nationalist Movement days. These factions went one step further than their Syrian hosts in actively attempting to mediate, both in Aden itself and in Moscow, between the rival South Yemeni camps. But by mid-February, as the new regime in Aden solidified its power with apparent Soviet support, both Syrian and radical Palestinian reportage shifted toward implicit acceptance of the victorious rebellion by omitting any further mention of Ali Nasir—though failing to add their voices to the diatribes against him coming from his former capital.[96] The "mainstream" PLO headed by Yasir Arafat ended up taking essentially the same position.[97]

In so doing, Syrian and Palestinian responses to South Yemen's crisis conformed to the overall pattern of grudging acceptance by radical, pro-Soviet Mideast forces of the forcible ouster of a former friend. And yet, even if their bilateral relations with Moscow are not rapidly or greatly disrupted, and even though this is by no means the first time Moscow has abruptly switched sides in a regional dispute, it must be a little disconcerting for these Mideast radicals to see so loyal and long-standing a leader as Ali Nasir unceremoniously consigned to political oblivion. Any lingering doubts on this score can only have been reinforced by the ouster of Babrak Karmal as Afghan president and party leader in May 1986.

Among the pro-Western Arab countries, by contrast, the greater degree of press freedom produced an interesting diversity of published reportage and commentary on the crisis in the PDRY, including the issue of outside intervention there. Some of this commentary emphasized the internal character of the crisis. Other editorials, though, were evenhandedly critical of both superpowers—whether for their alleged involvement on opposite South Yemeni sides or, on the contrary, for their alleged collusion in avoiding entanglement by consigning whole Arab countries into exclusive spheres of influence.[98] A few commentaries, oddly enough in English-language newspapers, focused their criticism on the United States, if only for its own "provocative" criticism of the Soviet role in South Yemen.[99] And in Oman—which had only very recently established diplomatic relations with Moscow, and which had a large stake in maintaining a tranquil border with South Yemen—the government-supervised media avoided any commentary on the crisis there at all.

But much of the moderate Arab media commentary was quite critical of the latest twist in Soviet policy toward South Yemen, sometimes bitterly so. Claims that Soviet forces had instigated or intervened in the fighting, and comparisons with Afghanistan, led to warnings about the "dangers, difficulties, and obstacles" in store for Arab governments that "opened even a window for the Soviets," or even for radical fellow Arabs. An Egyptian columnist, for example, cited South Yemen as evidence that "countries under Soviet hegemony enter into a cycle of bloody conflict far removed from their peoples' economic development."[100] Similar sentiments were scattered in some newspapers of Jordan, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates. More surprising were the almost equally outspoken objections to Soviet policy in the politically independent papers of Kuwait, whose diplomatic ties to Moscow had been unique (until late 1985) among the Arabian Peninsula monarchies. "Shall we say this is another Hungary or a new Prague?" asked one Kuwaiti columnist; "it is sufficient," he continued, "that we are now saying 'The Hell of Aden' instead of 'The Garden of Eden!'"[101]

These early misgivings about events in Aden were reflected not just in the press coverage but also in the government policies of the nearby pro-Western Arab states. For a couple of weeks, most of them continued to receive Ali Nasir's envoys and to refer to him in public almost as if he still held power.[102] Several more weeks elapsed before any of these states acknowledged hosting any high-level emissaries of the new regime in Aden. By mid-March, however, some two months after the coup, the foreign minister that this

[96]See, e.g., Radio Monte Carlo, Jan. 18, 1986, and Damascus radio, Jan. 20, 1986, both trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 21, 1986, p. A/1; and statement by the "Pan-Arab Command of the Arab Revolutionary Forces" broadcast by Tripoli radio, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 5, 1986, p. Q/5.

[97]See, e.g., various radio reports trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 23, 1986, p. A/1; Jan. 24, 1986, pp. A/5–6.

[98]See, e.g., *Al-Jazirah* (Riyadh), Jan. 20, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 27, 1986, pp. C/12–13.

[99]See, e.g., the analysis in *Arab Times*, Jan. 26, 1986, in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 28, 1986, p. C/1; and the editorial in *Khaleej Times*, Jan. 30, 1986, in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 31, 1986, pp. C/5–6.

[100]*Al-Akhbar* (Cairo), Feb. 10, 1986.

[101]*Al-Ray Al-Amm*, Jan. 17 and 29, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 23, 1986, p. C/1 (translation very slightly altered for clarity), and Jan. 31, 1986, p. C/1; *Sawt Al-Sha'b* (Amman), Jan. 20, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 22, 1986, p. F/2; *Al-Quds* (Jerusalem), Jan. 15, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 15, 1986, p. C/3; *Al-Qabas*, Jan. 29, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 30, 1986, pp. C/1–3; ; *Al-Wahdah* (Abu Dhabi), Jan. 29, 1986, as quoted on local radio and trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 29, 1986, pp. C/11–12.

[102]See, to take but one example, the reference on Jeddah radio to "President" Ali Nasir, Jan. 25, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 27, p. C/9.

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new regime had carried over (via Moscow) from the old one was able to make an unexceptional official tour to five out of the six conservative Arab members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—excluding only Oman from his itinerary but, significantly, including Saudi Arabia, the largest, wealthiest, and most anti-communist country of the lot.[103] Since that time, Oman has joined the others in publicizing an official meeting with a representative of the post-coup leadership of its radical neighbor,[104] and South Yemeni delegates have resumed their usual marginal role in the endless pre-summit inter-Arab consultations. Preliminary indications, then, are that all these countries are beginning to drift back toward a "business as usual" policy regarding South Yemen.

The same seems likely to hold true, broadly speaking, for Gulf Arab relations with South Yemen's Soviet patron as well. To be sure, the crisis in Aden may temporarily set back Moscow's concerted campaign to enhance its diplomatic and political presence on the Peninsula.[105] But the Soviets have as usual been both patient and persistent in this effort; and recent history suggests that the adverse effects on outside opinion of their latest intervention will largely wear off before too long, the more so as these Arab states resume their preoccupation with other violent confrontations in the Mediterranean and in the Gulf.

Thus, there could be a somewhat longer lag than previously anticipated before another GCC country follows the fresh example of Oman and the United Arab Emirates in establishing diplomatic relations with Moscow, or before either of those two countries welcomes a large resident Soviet diplomatic presence. Such considerations were most likely taken into account in Moscow, only to be overridden by the imperative of preserving the vastly greater existing Soviet presence in South Yemen. Ironically, of course, it is precisely this presence, up to some indeterminate threshold, that gives nearby countries an added incentive for cultivating correct relations with the USSR. So, unless the new South Yemeni leaders revert to a hostile stance toward their neighbors, or the Soviets themselves become even more actively involved in Aden, the medium-term outlook is for Soviet-GCC relations to get back on a course of incremental improvement.

Prospects and Implications

Despite the gradual return of a "business as usual" atmosphere in South Yemen's domestic and foreign affairs, past experience suggests that the prospects for continued stability are fairly dim. After the 1978 coup, for example, a new regime in Aden had also announced that it would maintain Rubayyi' Ali's "moderate" foreign policy; and the country's conservative neighbors had also tried to preserve that approach by applying economic and diplomatic pressure. And yet, within two years, both a new border war with North Yemen and a new internal political upheaval in Aden had erupted. The conflicts behind such unrest remain unresolved.

In the latest crisis, to be sure, many of the leading South Yemeni extremists have been literally removed from the scene; and their lesser-known replacements, while ruling out the return of Ali Nasir, have vowed not only to continue his "moderate" policy abroad but also to reconcile with his "misguided" adherents at home. These goals will almost certainly enjoy Soviet support, for the sake both of South Yemen's internal stability and of its rapprochement with Ethiopia, North Yemen, and other nearby states, each of which has its own reasons to remember Ali Nasir with something akin to nostalgia.[106] Indeed, published reports claim that representatives from the Soviet Union, Ethiopia, the two Yemens, and a number of other Arab interlocutors (Syria, Libya, Algeria, Lebanese Communists, radical Palestinian factions, and maybe even some Egyptians) are still engaged in exploratory talks aimed at some form of "national reconciliation" in Aden.[107] Under these circumstances, even the eventual return of Ali Nasir cannot be completely discounted.

Nevertheless, some warning signs are already apparent. Even as the new regime proceeds to "normalize" the situation, there have been unconfirmed but generally plausible accounts of continued trouble in and around Aden: shortages; chaotic administration; local disorders; new executions, arrests, and detentions; and perhaps even a few assassination attempts and anti-government demonstrations.[108] All these in-

[103]Aden radio, Mar. 19, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 19, 1986, p. C/2; and various radio reports from the Arab capitals on Al-Dali's itinerary, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, daily editions for the period Mar. 13–18, 1986.

[104]See, e.g., *Salalah radio*, Feb. 3, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 4, 1986, p. C/2.

[105]For an interesting pre-coup Arab view of Soviet "progress" in this regard, see Riyad Najib Al-Rayyis, "Gulf Summit in Wake of Soviet Relations: Policy of Searching for How and How Much," *Al-Mustaqbal*, Nov. 9, 1985, pp. 32–33, trans. in *JPRS-NEA*, Jan. 24, 1986, pp. 5–10.

[106]See, e.g., the recent interview with Soviet foreign ministry spokesman Vladimir Lomeyko in *Al-Safir* (Beirut), May 15, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, May 20, 1986, pp. H/1–5, esp. p. H/5.

[107]*Al-Watan*, May 8, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, May 12, 1986, p. C/3; *Al-Ittihad*, May 14 and 26, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, May 16, 1986, pp. C/1–2, and May 28, 1986, p. C/2.

[108]A month after he took over, Al-Attas noted that "we have released a number of detainess and we are still detaining others"; see his interview in *Al-Siyasah*, Feb. 22, 1986, loc. cit. In a similar vein, Minister of Interior Salih Munassar Al-Siyayli stressed that, in view of continuing "rumors" of

(cont. p. 69)

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gredients, combined with the country's byzantine rivalries and the widespread suspicion that some influential figures may still be hiding out, are a recipe for more unrest, even if not on as large a scale as in January.

As in the past, the Soviet Union can be expected to help the new regime cope with its troubles, and probably to intervene more directly if they threaten to become unmanageable. Still, there are already a few hints of latent tensions in this intimate but unstable relationship. For one thing, as noted above, the extent of South Yemeni "national reconciliation" remains a touchy issue, with Moscow (as usual in such cases) reportedly pressing for a faster and more comprehensive rapprochement between rival factions, including the followers if not the leader of Ali Nasir's camp. For another thing, recent South Yemeni statements suggest some renewed dissatisfaction with the extent of Soviet economic assistance in rebuilding the country's damaged economy as well. Numerous delegations of experts have come and gone, and a little Soviet-bloc aid has apparently actually arrived. More has been promised, including—ironically enough, for a country that boasts its own underused refinery and some undeveloped oil reserves—50,000 tons of petroleum products this year.[109] Even so, in late March, Aden radio broadcast an appeal for Moscow to "expand" and "implement" its promised aid programs; and as late as mid-April, Al-Bayd himself expressed the hope that the Soviets "will resume" economic aid to Aden.

Still another unsettled issue involves the Soviet military role in South Yemen. Precious little information has yet been published about the fate of all the Soviet facilities, advisers, and arms deliveries since the January crisis; in fact, in all the reports of close consultations between South Yemen and the Soviet bloc during this period, only a very few military delegations (including one to Aden, one to Moscow, and another to Eastern Europe) have been mentioned.[110] But it seems likely that much of South Yemen's arsenal was depleted or destroyed during the January battles; that not all of the evacuated Soviet advisers have returned; and that, even as Moscow retains its key military facilities and pervasive armed presence in the country, the precise nature of this bilateral security connection in the new, post-coup conditions has not yet been fully defined.[111] Meanwhile, of course, recent events argue that the Soviets, for all their massive presence in South Yemen, may not always be able to anticipate or fully control events there.

The last point offers an insight, important if not terribly original, into some of the broader problems of Soviet policy in the Third World. In South Yemen as elsewhere, the Soviets have underestimated—at considerable cost—the enduring force of factional, tribal, or indeed of national loyalties underlying an imported ideological veneer. Certainly, Soviet encouragement of Isma'il's return to Aden was a blunder, one that backfired when the violent internal power struggle erupted around him less than one year later. And Moscow compounded the error by its false reading of the situation in South Yemen once that power struggle got under way. As one Soviet spokesman admitted, in a rare burst of candor,

if you fastidiously reproach me for this or that wrong assessment in this situation of crisis, which was completely unfathomable for several days—oh, well, we all make mistakes![112]

Some Western analysts have gone much further. They argue that last January's events in Aden were the first real foreign policy crisis of an untested Gorbachëv administration, and exposed critical flaws both in the new crisis-management team and in overall Soviet policy toward the Middle East or even the entire Third World.[113] A more balanced view is that, while the Soviets can be faulted for failing to prevent the explosion, they can also be credited with managing a rapid and decisive rebound—albeit at some political price in the region, and with much the same truculent secrecy that characterized their response to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster a few months later. It is well to recall that Soviet intervention in the South Yemen crisis, sloppy and belated as it was, enabled Moscow to emerge quickly with its interests in Aden more or less

opposition, every "violation of security should be responded to by force"; Aden radio, Feb. 17, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 18, 1986, pp. C/4–5. For outside reports of arrests, executions, demonstrations, and other disorders during this period, see, e.g., *Al-Anba'*, Feb. 9, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 12, 1986, p. C/4; *Al-Ittihad Al-Usbu'i*, Feb. 13, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 18, 1986, p. C/5; *Al-Ray Al-Amm*, Mar. 6 and 10, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 7, 1986, p. C/3, and Mar. 10, 1986, pp. C/5–6; Cairo radio, citing *Al-Nahar*, Mar. 22, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 24, 1986, p. C/4; and *Al-Ittihad*, Mar. 17, 1986, citing visiting PDRY foreign minister Al-Dali's denial of "reports" about an attempt to assassinate Al-Attas, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Mar. 18, 1986, p. C/3.

[109]*Aden radio, May 22, 1986, trans. in FBIS-MEA, May 23, 1986, p. C/2.*

[110]Aden radio, Feb. 24, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 25, 1986, p. H/4; Aden radio, Mar. 8, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 10, 1986, pp. C/4–5.

[111]For early and unsubstantiated reports about these issues, see, e.g., *The Times* (London), Feb. 10, 1986; and Manama radio, Feb. 13, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 13, 1986, p. C/6.

[112]Interview with Nikolay Portugalov, described as a "Soviet foreign policy expert" and "staff member of the CPSU Central Committee," on Vienna radio, Feb. 27, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 5, 1986, pp. CC/1–3.

[113]See, e.g., the news analyses in *The Washington Post*, Jan. 22, 1986; and *The Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 18, 19, 20, 1986. Compare the remarkably judicious analysis in *Ukaz* (Jeddah), Jan. 27, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Feb. 6, 1986, pp. C/9–10.

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intact, and its relations with neighboring countries only slightly strained.

In this respect, a capsule comparison with some other Third World clients of the Soviet Union is instructive, even if it cannot by its nature capture the special nuances of each case. In Grenada and in Afghanistan, where two other pro-Soviet Marxist regimes were riven by violent factional rivalries, Moscow has fared far worse: in the former instance primarily because of forceful external intervention; in the latter, primarily because of forceful internal resistance. Neither factor has been present in South Yemen. "We all remember Grenada," mused Nayyif Hawatmeh, the pro-Soviet Palestinian leader, at the height of the fighting in Aden that he and other like-minded mediators were attempting to stifle. "Grenada," he continued, "should not repeat itself in the PDRY!"[114]

A glance a bit further back, of course, reveals that a number of self-professed socialist or even Marxist-Leninist regimes have managed to break with Moscow without direct outside help: Egypt, Somalia, Yugoslavia, China, and Albania, to name a few. In none of those cases, though, was the entire military, economic, and political order (and particularly the ruling party apparatus) as closely tied to, dependent upon, and to some extent at least genuinely enamored of the Soviet Union as is the case in South Yemen.[115]

Some South Yemeni leaders, like some of those in other Third World Soviet clients, may resent certain features of their patron's policy: too many intrusive advisers, not enough economic aid. But they seek the uncertain rewards of a closer Western connection only at their own peril; there may be a more "reliable" replacement waiting in the wings. If they then try to reassure Moscow of their fidelity, it may be—as both Rubayyi' Ali and more recently Ali Nasir himself discovered to their dismay—too little and too late. And even if a leader is merely spectacularly ineffective, as in Afghanistan, the Soviets have demonstrated their ability to depose one figure and impose another: either violently (as with Hafizullah Amin in December 1979), or quietly (as with Amin's own Soviet-selected replacement, Babrak Karmal, in May 1986), as the case may be.

Thus the case of South Yemen illustrates both the limits and, especially, the extent of Moscow's influence among its Third World clients. It may be, as one analyst has written, that the Soviets have not been able either "to ensure that their favorite stays in power" in Aden, or even to preserve an "illusion of complete agreement" on every military or diplomatic issue.[116] Nor have they been able, as the latest crisis demonstrates, to prevent a destructive outbreak of factional infighting among their own friends. But in Aden—as in other areas where Moscow's vested interests are extensive, where its capabilities for intervention are already in place, and where the risks of large-scale counterintervention are correspondingly low—the Soviets have been and will likely remain able to maintain the allegiance of their troubled (and often troublesome) allies.

[114]Interview in *Al-Khalij*, Jan. 22, 1986, trans. in *FBIS-MEA*, Jan. 23, 1986, p. C/3–4. See also the interview with Helmut Sonnenfeldt in *Le Point* (Paris), Jan. 27, 1986.

[115]A similar argument can be found in Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR," pp. 793–94.

[116]Page, op. cit., p. 210. Significantly, however, Page concludes that "since 1967 the USSR has moved from . . . an extremely weak position in southern Arabia to being the strongest outside power" there—in part because of the leverage supplied by South Yemen (p. 212).

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Note

Watching China's Military: A Personal View

Harlan W. Jencks

SINCE THE "opening" of relations between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United States in 1971-72, the volume of material written about Chinese military affairs has expanded exponentially.[1] Unfortunately, much of this outpouring has been of poor quality, and error and misconception have been especially evident in the writings about the use of the "China card" in superpower relations. Over-enthusiastic speculation about possible arms sales to China, moreover, persists despite the remarkably small scale of actual sales.[2] The purpose of this essay, therefore, is to examine the current state of Chinese military studies in the West and to assess its evolution in recent years, noting in particular accessibility of sources and issues of interest. What follows is an overview, admittedly impressionistic and personal, of the work and views of those whom I consider to be serious and reasonably qualified. These include scholars, intelligence professionals, and journalists who specialize in China and publish on PRC military affairs. For purposes of brevity, I shall refer to this loosely defined community as China military watchers.

I use the term "community" advisedly. It has been said that those who study the Soviet Union always agree, and all hate each other, whereas those who study China always disagree, and are all friends. China military watchers are, indeed, friends. Moreover, there are few enough of us so that a quorum can gather around a moderately large conference table—and does fairly frequently. The observations that follow are based partly on my participation recently in three such conferences—one in Garmisch, West Germany, in May 1983; one in Washington, DC, in October 1984;

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[1]See, e.g., US Defense Intelligence Agency, *A Selective Annotated Bibliography on the Chinese People's Liberation Army*, No. DDB-2600-4737-85, 3 Vols., Washington, DC, DIA, 1985. Cf. Edward J.M. Rhodes, *The Chinese Red Army, 1927–1963: An Annotated Bibliography*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1964.

[2]Actual weapons transfers from the West have included an artillery shell plant from the United States (1985); probable purchase of naval gun-mounts from Italy (perhaps in 1985); and tank technology from Israel (possibly in 1982). (For a brief discussion of the probability of Israeli arms sales to China, see Yitzak Shichor, "The Middle East," in Gerald Segal and William T. Tow, Eds., *Chinese Defence Policy*, London, Macmillan, 1984, p. 272.) French and British avionics packages for the F-7 fighter have been purchased, and a similar package may soon come from the United States for the F-8. A contract with a British consortium to upgrade Chinese destroyers was signed in December 1982, and then canceled. The two biggest "dual-use" purchases were in 1975 for a British Rolls-Royce jet engine plant (the project was abandoned some time in 1979), and in 1984 for 24 US Sikorsky S-70C helicopters (most are now reportedly grounded for lack of the maintenance package the Chinese refused to buy). Despite all the rumors and negotiations, no warplanes, armored vehicles, or anti-tank/air defense missiles have been sold to China by any Western country, with the possible exception of a few sample end-items. Some observers suspect that there are perhaps a hundred French, Italian, Israeli, and/or British technical advisers in the Chinese arms industry. For a discussion of arms sales to China, see William T. Tow, "Arms Sales to China," in ibid., pp. 149–63.

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and the third at the International Studies Association Conference in Anaheim, California, in March 1986.

There is also a large body of staff personnel who labor in obscurity within the policy, intelligence, and military bureaucracies of various governments but who have considerable input to government publications. As Moltke the Elder observed, however, "staff officers have no names," so they remain unknown to the "outside" world. Their personal contacts with the China military watchers of published scholarship are sporadic, although many of the latter have emerged from within their ranks. Their contacts with each other are also remarkably limited.[3]

Today, it is no longer true that China military watchers always disagree. There seems to be substantial agreement on quite a number of major issues, although of course China military watchers debate details endlessly. Indeed, the consensus is so broad that it has prompted some of us to wonder if we are not engaged in an incestuous exercise of reenforcing each other's errors. This is especially troubling, for China military watchers are as diverse a group as ever gathered around a conference table.

Our concern about too much consensus stems, at least in part, from the sobering experience of February 17, 1979. Virtually all of us, unless we were privy to current classified information, were quite surprised by the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. We all agreed that China lacked the military capability to defeat the Vietnamese without unacceptable losses. We all also noted that if the Chinese tried it anyway, they would run the grave risk of precipitating Soviet intervention. As it turns out, we quite correctly enumerated all the excellent military, economic, and political reasons the Chinese had for not attacking Vietnam. In fact, Chinese leaders now admit that they did not do well militarily, that the danger of Soviet intervention was very real, and that the war was economically costly.[4] Yet, the fact remains that China *did* invade Vietnam. The chastening conclusion was that even when well-informed observers correctly grasp all the objective military and other factors, Chinese decision-makers need not necessarily draw the same "logical" conclusions. Today's widespread consensus is therefore as much troubling as it is reassuring.

John Frankenstein quite correctly points out that most openly published "China military watching" is not military analysis at all. "Most of our work is really a subset of political analysis, not defense analysis."[5] By training, most China military watchers are political scientists or historians, though perhaps half of us have personal military experience. Since our (limited) sources are the same and our training is similar, it is little wonder that there is much consensus. Unfortunately, "defense studies" is also a poorly defined field distinguished by its emphasis on economics, operations analysis, conflict modeling, and so forth. Naturally, studies of this nature require the kind of quantitative data we just do not have on the PRC defense establishment.

Sources

China military watchers have benefited relatively less than other China scholars have from the "opening" of the PRC. Firsthand observation of China's military system is still at the stage of occasional guided tours, conducted for delegations of foreigners who are not, for the most part, China scholars. However, over the past several years, a few official US delegations have been given fairly close looks at selected parts of the PRC military establishment. Unfortunately, the Chinese usually insist upon confidentiality from foreign military delegations. Thus, little has been published, for example, about the findings and experiences of US military delegations concerned with military training and with fighter avionics.

In 1985, however, the Chinese permitted unprecedented access to and open publication of articles about certain military-industrial sectors for which they particularly desired foreign technology and investment. Two notable examples were a Rand Corporation team's evaluation of the electronics and metallurgical industries,[6] and an aerospace technology team composed of US experts from government and industry.[7]

While the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has sent numerous delegations to the West, including at least a dozen to the United States, Westerners have learned little from them. When Chinese professional soldiers visit abroad, the flow of information is maddeningly unidirectional. PLA delegations have intensively stud-

[3]Two gatherings of these self-described "technical elves" were convened in Washington, DC, in March 1985 and May 1986 to try to establish contacts across bureaucratic lines. It is telling that the meetings were organized by a military officer who has made his mark in open publications. See Richard J. Latham, "Summary of Discussions at the Conference on PRC National Security Affairs: An Assessment of Analytical Trends," unpublished circular letter, March 21, 1985.

[4]See Harlan W. Jencks, "Lessons of a 'Lesson': China-Vietnam, 1979," in Robert E. Harkavy and Stephanie G. Neuman, Eds., *The Lessons of Recent Wars in the Third World*, Lexington, MA, D.C. Heath, 1985.

[5]Private correspondence from John Frankenstein, Apr. 6, 1986.

[6]Jonathan D. Pollack, *The Chinese Electronics Industry in Transition*, N-2306, Santa Monica, CA, Rand Corporation, 1985; and K.C. Yeh, *Industrial Innovation in China with Special Reference to the Metallurgical Industry*, N-2307, Santa Monica, CA, Rand Corporation, 1985.

[7]See the series in July 1985 by Craig Covault in *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (New York), Jul. 8, p. 16; Jul. 15, p. 61; Jul. 22, p. 69; and Jul. 29, p. 55.

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ied everything from the National Training Center at Fort Irwin to the National War College in Washington, DC, but they have been extremely reticent to reveal anything about their own training or operations.

So, despite occasional tantalizing peeks, the best places to study PRC military affairs remain Hong Kong, Tokyo, and the major China studies centers in the West. In short, China military watchers are only barely better off than other Western social scientists and historians were 10 years ago. We catch glimpses from train windows, watch military parades from afar, and occasionally interview a PLA leader, but the day-to-day business of Chinese national defense is still closed to us. For the most part, we continue to rely heavily on the "China-watching" research methods of the 1950's and 1960's. To be sure, China military watchers understand that the Chinese have good reasons to keep military matters secret, so we do not get indignant when certain subjects and geographic areas are declared "off limits." That is just the nature of our endeavor.

Partially off-setting this problem is the fact that a fairly high percentage of China military watchers have access to the classified information produced by their respective governments. But this is not nearly as great an advantage as one might suppose, particularly with respect to the analysis of long-range trends and the interplay of military considerations with economic, political, and social factors. It is worth noting that while not every China military watcher reads classified information, intelligence agencies and other governmental bureaucracies are voracious readers of our unclassified publications, and frequently commission our unclassified research.

A few new sources of information have appeared in the post-Mao era, and this has made "China military watching" a good deal more productive. Opportunities to study Chinese military technology are periodically afforded by military industrial exhibitions, both in China and abroad. Beginning with the AUSDES exhibition in Australia in May 1984, China's defense industries have been exhibiting their wares on the world arms market. PRC arms sales have expanded rapidly since 1982, and Chinese weapons are now in widespread use, especially in Africa and the Middle East.[8] PRC arms marketing has necessitated disclosure of technical characteristics on much of the equipment in current PLA service, and once sold abroad, Chinese weapons are often subject to detailed scrutiny.

The Chinese have also hosted several exhibitions, most notably the naval electronics exhibition (NATSEDES-83) in Shanghai in July 1983. Another, the Asian Defence Technology Exhibition (ASIADEC-86), is set for November 1986.[9] NATSEDES-83 pointed up the interesting relationship between the PLA (probably the General Staff Department) and the Hong Kong magazine *Xiandai Junshi* (Contemporary Military Affairs) which advertised itself as co-sponsor of the exhibition.[10] Since it began publication in late 1976, *Xiandai Junshi*'s highly "patriotic" coverage has generally followed the Chinese Communist Party line. Its PRC sources are excellent, and it is clearly a conduit to the outside world of what the PLA high command wishes outsiders to know (and think) about Chinese defense issues.[11]

Within China, several magazines are now published to stimulate popular interest in modern military affairs and technology. Examples include *Bingqi Zhishi* (Ordnance Knowledge) and *Hangkong Zhishi* (Aviation Knowledge).[12] These publications mostly are written about abstract categories of weapons (nuclear warheads, cruise missiles, "stealth" aircraft, and so forth) and almost always use foreign weapons systems as examples. From such magazines, though, it is possible to glean insights into Chinese strengths, weaknesses, and interests. It is also worth noting that these magazines are enormously popular in China, and most issues sell out quickly. They are available on newsstands in China, and are freely exported abroad.

Issues

With these considerations in mind, it is useful to examine the major issues that have dominated con-

[8]On sales of fighter planes to Iraq, Iran, and Egypt, see *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, Apr. 11, 1983, pp. 16–18, and Aug. 15, 1983, pp. 129–34 and 160–61. Chinese export orders in late 1984 reportedly included US$200 million in naval vessels for Egypt and US$2 billion (sic) in tanks and other "assorted hardware" for Iraq. (See Gordon Jacobs, "China's Military and Economic Support," *Asian Defence Journal* [Kuala Lumpur], November 1984, p. 71). The PRC's Northern Industrial Corporation (NORINCO), the export arm of the Ministry of Ordnance Industry, was reportedly China's fifth largest exporter in 1985, with US$1.6 billion in sales—and NORINCO handles neither aircraft nor ships! (*Xiandai Junshi*, May 5, 1985, p. 11).

[9]See announcement in *Jane's Defence Weekly* (London), Jan. 11, 1986, p. 20.

[10]*Xiandai Junshi*, July 1983 and September 1983, cover stories and passim.

[11]*Xiandai Junshi* is published in traditional Chinese characters, as opposed to the simplified characters used in the PRC, and contains some material (especially advertising) in English. Most issues contain reports on PRC weapons, which are invariably hailed as modern and effective, even when they are copies of 30-year-old Soviet types. The magazine plays up the PLA's foreign contacts, evidently to increase competition for PLA business. It also gives highly favorable coverage to PRC political-military initiatives (the 1979 invasion of Vietnam, "peaceful reunification" with Taiwan, and so forth).

[12]*Bingqi Zhishi* is a bi-monthly and *Hangkong Zhishi* is a monthly. Both are published in Beijing.

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temporary Western studies of the Chinese military—namely, modernization, national defense strategy, and civil-military relations.

Modernization. This is currently the most "written-about" subject in Chinese military studies. For decades, China military watchers have been trying to tell the world about the PLA's relative backwardness. Recently, we have emphasized that weapons and equipment are only part of the problem. Frank Romance, Georges Tan Eng Bok, and others have pointed out the need for modernization of strategic and tactical doctrine.[13] Harvey Nelsen and Paul Godwin, inter alia, have written on the importance of reorganization.[14] Godwin, William Heaton, and I have emphasized the importance of modern training and professional education.[15] Virtually all China military watchers have noted the vital importance of personnel modernization: the recruitment and promotion of young educated cadres, and the retirement of old peasant guerrilla fighters.

The consensus view on modernization has been well summarized by John J. Sloan in congressional testimony, and by Tom Robinson. Sloan listed six major categories of required Chinese military improvements: (1) weapons; (2) training/education/readiness; (3) doctrine and tactics; (4) defense technology and industry; (5) logistics; and (6) organization/command and control. He stated that weapons clearly had the lowest priority, largely because the other improvements were prerequisites for the effective absorption and use of advanced weapons. Moreover, the other improvements were relatively less expensive and more likely to benefit the overall economy.[16] After making many of the same points in *China Quarterly* in June 1982, Robinson concluded: "If a prediction may be ventured therefore, it is for relative stability of direction and pace of Chinese military modernization along lines by now clearly evident."[17] In mid-1986, there is no reason to modify Robinson's conclusion.

One particularly important policy aspect of the "modernization" consensus is the virtual unanimity regarding the outlook for arms sales to China. In the same June 1982 issue of *China Quarterly,* Douglas Stuart and William Tow wrote, "It is likely that China and the U.S. will continue to expand their arms trade relationship in the medium term. Actual weapons purchases will probably be infrequent, however, and of limited financial or military importance."[18] They had made the same point in 1981 with respect to Chinese purchases of arms from European countries.[19]

In June 1984, just before Defense Minister Zhang Aiping visited the United States, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense James A. Kelly testified to Congress that "the Chinese face enormous needs with limited funds, and they must be careful shoppers. In most cases, they do not consider procurement of end items to be a viable option; they want the technology with which to manufacture their own weapons."[20] Despite Kelly's statement, backed by the overwhelming unanimity of official and unofficial China military watchers, newspaper headlines on June 15 heralded a new era in US-Chinese military relations: "U.S. and China Agree on Arms Sale" (*Washington Times*); "U.S. Sets First Arms Sale to Peking" (*Washington Post*); "Weinberger Negotiates Arms Deal with China" (*USA Today*); "China, U.S. Near Pact on American Arms Sales" (*Wall Street Journal*). The cause of all this excitement was the *unilateral* announcement by the US Defense Department of an agreement *in principle* that *if* the Chinese should wish to purchase certain types of weapons, and *if* they could come to terms with American defense contractors, the Defense Department is willing *in principle* to *allow* the sales to take place. The myth of the "vast untapped China market" is alive and well, and the Sino-Western arms trade "will probably continue to be characterized by inflated expectations and dashed hopes."[21]

National Defense Strategy. Here, too, there is general consensus on China's defense strategy, currently

[13]Francis J. Romance, "Modernization of China's Armed Forces," *Asian Survey* (Berkeley), March 1980, pp. 298–310; Jonathan D. Pollack, *China's Military Modernization, Policy, and Strategy,* P-6641, Santa Monica, CA, Rand Corporation, 1980. A brilliant essay on the terminology and epistemology of Chinese military thought is Georges Tan Eng Bok, "Strategic Doctrine," in Segal and Tow, op. cit., pp. 3–17.

[14]Harvey W. Nelsen, *The Chinese Military System,* 2nd. ed., Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1981; and Paul H.B. Godwin, "Toward a New Strategy?" in Segal and Tow, op. cit., pp. 36–49.

[15]William R. Heaton, "Military Professional Education in China," *China Quarterly* (London), March 1980, pp. 122–28; and Harlan W. Jencks, *From Muskets to Missiles: Politics and Professionalism in the Chinese Army, 1945–1981,* Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1982, pp. 151ff.

[16]John J. Sloan in *The Implications of US-China Military Cooperation,* a workshop sponsored by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Congressional Research Service, Washington, DC, January 1982, pp. 26–36. (The year of publication given by the US Government Printing Office is 1981).

[17]Thomas W. Robinson, "Chinese Military Modernization in the 1980's," *China Quarterly,* June 1982. p. 252.

[18]Douglas Stuart and William Tow, "Chinese Military Modernization," ibid., p. 269.

[19]Stuart and Tow, "China's Military Turns to the West," *International Affairs* (London), Spring 1981, pp. 286–300.

[20]Quoted in "China's Defense Chief Here To Discuss Sales," *The Washington Post,* June 12, 1984.

[21]Douglas Stuart and William Tow, "China's Military Turns to the West" (preliminary draft, December 1980), p. 8. (See fn. 19 for published article.)

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characterized by Chinese leaders as "people's war under modern conditions."[22] The Chinese clearly do not expect war with any of their neighbors any time soon, especially not with the Soviet Union. China's overall security strategy, notes Jonathan Pollack, "will remain very heavily focused on the political, diplomatic, and psychological elements of statecraft . . . . They will refine many of their present military policies rather than discarding them outright."[23]

Two recent versions of the consensus view are my own *China Quarterly* article of June 1984, and Gerald Segal's Institute of Conflict Studies monograph of late 1983.[24] Both drew heavily on earlier work by Paul Godwin and Jack Harris.[25]

An interesting point of disagreement within the larger consensus is whether "people's war under modern conditions" is, in fact, really "new," or whether it is merely a modification of the people's war doctrine first worked out by Mao Zedong during the Yan'an period (1937–45). A slight majority, myself included, hold the latter view, which is of course the official PRC position as well.[26] Others, most notably Segal, identify two elements of "people's war under modern conditions" that are so new as to make the doctrine qualitatively different from Mao's: the nuclear and maritime elements.

China's nuclear strategy has long been characterized as "minimal deterrence."[27] Recently, there have been significant new developments in the PRC nuclear program, including new missiles (a submarine-launched ballistic missile and the CSS-4 ICBM) and tactical nuclear warheads, and possibly multiple reentry vehicles. These have prompted questions as to China's capabilities and intentions to conduct counterforce targeting, controlled escalation, and even nuclear warfighting. Gerald Segal, Jonathan Pollack, Robert Wang, and Robert Sutter have made important contributions to the study of PRC nuclear policy and the closely related issue of arms control.[28] Parenthetically, there are indications that the Chinese are beginning to take serious interest in arms control.[29]

The "maritimist" shift in Chinese strategy is much debated. The leading advocate of the existence of this shift is David Muller, whose brilliant *China as a Maritime Power* is unquestionably the best study of the PLA navy.[30] Taking a longer historical view, Bruce Swanson cautions that while "maritimist" views have occasionally gained official favor in China, they invariably are eclipsed—and usually sooner rather than later. He writes:

China's naval and maritime successes over the past decade have placed the navy in a strong position at the highest leadership levels, both civil and military. A consensus seems to be taking shape and plans are being devised calling for even bolder maritime policies. Serious problems do exist and . . . China has a poor record at maintaining constant growth or planned modernisation programmes in the naval and maritime spheres.[31]

Two much-noted reporters on Chinese naval affairs are Gordon Jacobs and Bradley Hahn, both of whom have been widely published in military journals such as *Jane's Defence Weekly*, *International Defence Reporter*, and *Naval Institute Proceedings*. Jacobs's work is good solid journalism. Hahn, however, is much

[22]"People's war under modern conditions" is both the strategy for warfighting and the military component of China's war deterrent. In the event of Soviet attack, the PLA is expected to conduct an "active defense" combining guerrilla, positional, and mobile warfare. Should all mobile and positional forces be overcome, China's ultimate recourse is protracted guerrilla resistance to conquest and occupation. The three fundamentals of "people's war" are its defensive character, mass mobilization, and protraction. These characteristics are compatible with a wide variety of tactics and weapons, including even nuclear weapons. See Jack H. Harris, "Politics of National Security in China," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), March-April 1979, pp. 64–66.

[23]Pollack, *China's Military Modernization, Policy, and Strategy*, p. 14.

[24]Segal, *The Soviet 'Threat' at China's Gates*, London, The Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1983; and Jencks, "People's War Under Modern Conditions: Wishful Thinking, National Suicide, or Effective Deterrent?" *China Quarterly*, June 1984, pp. 305–19.

[25]Paul H.B. Godwin, "China's Defense Modernization: Of Tortoise Shells and Tigers' Tails," *Air University Review* (Montgomery, AL), November-December 1981, pp. 2–19; Harris, loc. cit., pp. 64–66.

[26]For the official view, see Fu Zhong, "Mao Zedong's Military Science Is Forever the Chinese People's Treasure," *Hongqi* (Beijing), Aug. 1, 1981, trans. and summarized in *Xinhua*, Aug. 2, 1981; and Li Jijun, "The Characteristics and Historical Position of Mao Zedong's Military Thought," *Hongqi*, Jul. 16, 1982, pp. 11–16, trans. in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: China* (Washington, DC—hereafter *FBIS-CHI*), Aug. 5, 1982, pp. K/15–23.

[27]Jonathan Pollack has produced a distinguished body of work on Chinese nuclear strategy dating from before his widely noted "Chinese Attitudes Toward Nuclear Weapons, 1964–1969," *China Quarterly*, April-June 1972, pp. 244–71, and continuing today.

[28]See, e.g., Segal, "China's Nuclear Posture for the the 1980's," *Survival* (London), January-February 1981, pp. 11–18; Pollack, *Security, Strategy, and the Logic of Chinese Foreign Policy*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of East Asian Studies, 1981; Wang, "China's Evolving Strategic Doctrine," *Asian Survey*, October 1984, pp. 1040–55; and Sutter, *Chinese Nuclear Weapons and American Interests—Conflicting Policy Choices*, Washington, DC, Congressional Research Service, 1983.

[29]In December 1983, for example, party General Secretary Hu Yaobang and Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro issued a joint statement calling on the United States and the Soviet Union to resume INF limitation talks "in good faith." See Vice Premier Li Peng's speech in *Jingji Ribao* (Beijing), Jan. 24, 1985. A good recent analysis is Gerald Segal, "China and Arms Control," *World Today* (London), August/September 1985, pp. 162–66.

[30]Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1983.

[31]Swanson, "Naval Forces," in Segal and Tow, op. cit., p. 96. Also see Swanson's *Eighth Voyage of the Dragon: A History of China's Quest for Seapower*, Annapolis, MD, Naval Institute Press, 1982.

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given to speculation, and I believe he gives extremely optimistic "high-side" estimates of Chinese military, industrial, and technical capabilities. Hahn's work has not gone unnoticed in Beijing, and he has had unprecedented access to PLA warships. His work therefore cannot be ignored, though it must be evaluated carefully.

Civil-Military Relations. On this multi-faceted issue, there not only is disagreement but outright conflict among several schools of thought. The most hotly debated points are civilian control versus PLA praetorianism, and the role of the PLA high command in power politics.

At one extreme stand two correspondents for the *Far Eastern Economic Review,* David Bonavia and Mary Lee. They view the Chinese political process almost exclusively in terms of factional politics and personal cliques.[32] For brevity, I shall refer to this as the "factionalism" school. Proponents of this view emphasize the resistance of some PLA elders, notably Ye Jianying, to "de-Maoization" and the undoubtedly adverse effects upon the army of some of the current economic and social reforms. They maintain that a high percentage of current PLA cadres were appointed during the Cultural Revolution, and presume, therefore, that these cadres are still "Whateverists" who oppose Deng Xiaoping's reforms on principle.[33]

Proponents of the "factionalism" school hold that, after Deng's passing, "the military" is likely to depose party General Secretary Hu Yaobang and Premier Zhao Ziyang, both loyal supporters of Deng, unless Deng succeeds in purging his numerous military opponents first. They see Deng making slow but significant progress in this purge, while encountering persistent and stubborn resistance. Meanwhile, Bonavia, in particular, has been watching for a PLA coup d'etat, and actually once reported one (quite mistakenly).[34] Less extreme spokesmen of this school include Parris Chang of Pennsylvania State University and Jürgen Domes of Saar University (West Germany).[35] China military watchers of this school continue to adhere, at least in part, to the so-called Whitson thesis and therefore make much of field army affiliations. The "Whitson thesis," popularized by William Whitson, actually originated among Nationalist Chinese analysts. Based on the explicit assumption that the Communist Party and army are similar to the Kuomintang Party and army, the thesis contends that both are ruled by a "warlord"-style "balance of power." "Each member of the [Communist] high command, with rare exceptions, has belonged to one of six possible elite systems—the central elite and five field army elites—which continue to compete . . . ."[36] Much of the Hong Kong press (notably *Ming Pao* and *Cheng Ming*) tends to see PRC civil-military relations in this light, as do virtually all China military watchers published in Taiwan.[37]

At the other end of the spectrum of opinion stand Ellis Joffe of the Hebrew University and I,[38] representing what I shall call, for brevity's sake, the "professionalism" school. Joffe's work on the subject spans the past 25 years, and includes his widely noted *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps.*[39] His contribution to the Garmisch conference volume sums up this school's view nicely as he describes the strong predilection of the PLA and its leaders for "political quiescence," though he does caution that "if the military made no attempt to overstep the limits of political activity set down for it by the Party [in the 1950's], it did not hesitate to clash with the Party leadership when its professional interests were involved."[40] Joffe notes that China's military leaders are committed to the "principle of civilian supremacy over the military, a commitment born out of their nationalism and buttressed by their indoctrination, training, and experience."

Adding organisational strength to these factors has been the network of controls instituted by the Party in

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[32]See, e.g., Mary Lee, "The Economic Front," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong—hereafter *FEER*), Feb. 21, 1985, pp. 24–25; David Bonavia, "The Ashes of History," ibid., Feb. 23, 1984, p. 30; and idem, "No Talking in the Ranks," ibid., Dec. 15, 1981, pp. 26–27.

[33]A recent outspoken exposition of this view is Shu-shin Wang's review-essay, "Revamping China's Military," *Problems of Communism,* March-April 1985, pp. 111–17. "Whateverists" refers to those Maoists who cite Mao's sacred authority as justification for their positions: "Whatever policy Chairman Mao has decided upon, we shall resolutely defend; whatever instructions the Chairman has issued, we shall steadfastly obey." Quoted in Parris Chang, "Chinese Politics: Deng's Turbulent Quest," *Problems of Communism,* January-February 1981, p. 3.

[34]When some PRC official mentioned that Deng had "withdrawn to the second line," Bonavia reported that "the situation has all the earmarks of a bloodless coup." See "Deng Takes a Back Seat," *FEER,* Feb. 12, 1982, pp. 12–13.

[35]Chang, op. cit., pp. 1–21. Domes's most recent work is his well-researched and thoughtful *P'eng Te-huai: The Man and the Image,* Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1985.

[36]William W. Whitson and Chen-hsia Huang, *Chinese High Command: A History of Communist Military Politics, 1927–71,* New York, Praeger, 1973, pp. 498–517 (the quotation is from p. 499).

[37]See, e.g., Yü Yü-lin, "The Role of the PLA in Mainland China's Power Transition," *Issues and Studies* (Taipei), December 1985, pp. 76–92. The biographical sketches of PLA leaders that frequently appear in *Issues and Studies* generally are accurate and remarkably detailed.

[38]Jencks, *From Muskets to Missiles*; and idem, "China's Civil-Military Relations, 1949–80," in Morris Janowitz, Ed., *Civil-Military Relations: Regional Perspectives,* Beverly Hills, CA, Sage Publications, 1981, pp. 120–59. Also see Alister I. Johnson, "Changing Party-Army Relations in China, 1979–1984," *Asian Survey,* October 1984, pp. 1012–39.

[39]Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1965.

[40]Joffe, "Civil-Military Relations," in Segal and Tow, op. cit., p. 19.

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the armed forces which, despite its weakness during certain periods, has acted as a powerful check on military officers. A further check has been the innate conservatism of the professional military as well as their discipline.[41]

In stark contrast to the "factionalism" school, Joffe concludes that "the professional military seem to have little ground for serious disaffection with the Deng leadership."[42]

More important, it is unlikely that many professional commanders were among the dissidents, given their long-standing doubts about the applicability of Maoist principles and their concern with material development as the basis for military modernisation. At any rate, no high-ranking officer associated with the professional military *has publicly spoken out against the leadership's economic or ideological policies. In fact,* these officers *have probably supported Deng and his colleagues, thereby creating a coalition that transcended institutional lines and brought together, as has happened in the past, moderate Party leaders and the professional military* against *their more politically minded military colleagues, who were allied with other Party leaders.*[43]

Here, Joffe touches on one of the knottiest problems in analyzing China's civil-military relations: the institutionally cross-cutting nature of political issues, and of the coalitions that form over them. Closely related are the perennial arguments among China military watchers about which PRC leaders are "military" and which are "civilians." In my view, much of the debate about civil-military relations boils down to debate over who is or is not "military." As I have noted elsewhere, in sharp contrast to the Soviet high command, "the PLA's leaders are not co-opted into the top circles of the . . . Party—they were there from the outset."[44] They have always been political *as well as* military leaders. Ye Jianying, for example, "undoubtedly views himself (and is viewed by others in China) not solely as a representative of the military, but as a national leader whose concerns are not restricted by institutional boundaries."[45] Precisely so: in my view, not everything Ye says should be regarded as "the military view." His political activities as an individual leader must be distinguished from his consistent efforts, over the decades, to keep the PLA as an institution out of politics.

Tellingly, Shu-shin Wang used Ye as a primary example to discredit my position in the course of a blistering attack on my book in a review essay in this journal.[46] Wang, Bonavia, and others in the "factionalism" school refuse to make any distinction between "old warriors" like Ye,[47] and the Chinese officer corps as a whole. Their view seems to be that the officer corps is not a "whole" at all, but a collection of conflicting factions.

Parris Chang is undoubtedly correct in identifying the underlying issue in civil-military relations as the continuing conflict of institutionalized versus personalized politics. He contends that while civil-military relations are in a "different mode" from the Maoist era, strong personalities are still likely to be decisive. Although he certainly does not predict a coup, he believes that the institutionalization of Chinese politics is still so uncertain that we cannot be at all sure what the PLA will do after Deng Xiaoping dies. Chang holds that Joffe and I have far overstated the degree of military professionalization, which is a key component of institutionalized politics.[48]

This brief discussion of the contentious issue of civil-military relations has been far from rigorous, and no doubt "leans to one side," so the reader is encouraged to consult other sources. Lest anyone think that attacks are only conducted by one side of the debate, I must confess to my gleeful participation in subjecting Parris Chang to "mass struggle and criticism" over the same issues at the Washington conference in 1984, when he was a minority of one. Despite it all, I must add, we are still friends.

Influence

Given the consensus China military watchers share on most issues, one would expect us to have significant influence on policy-making. In fact, while it is hard to evaluate, we seem to have little—at least in the United States. As noted above, we have generally been conservative and skeptical about the "China card," the advisability of arms sales, and the extent of the Chinese arms market. Nevertheless, the policy momentum in Washington and London (at least) has reflected an official desire for more and closer military

[41]Ibid., p. 20.
[42]Ibid., p. 30.
[43]Ibid., pp. 32–33 (emphasis added).
[44]Jencks, *From Muskets to Missiles*, p. 28. See Jonathan R. Adelman, "The Formative Influence of Civil Wars: Social Roles of the Soviet and Chinese Armies," *Armed Forces and Society* (Chicago), 5, No. 1, 1978, pp. 93–116.
[45]Joffe, "Party and Military in China: Professionalism in Command?" *Problems of Communism*, September-October 1983, p. 56.
[46]Shu-shin Wang, loc. cit., p. 115.
[47]This apt term was coined by Ross H. Munro, in "China Turns to Its Old Warriors," *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), Mar. 9, 1977, p. 2.
[48]Private discussion with Parris Chang, Jan. 16, 1986.

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relations and sales. The most that can be said for the influence of China military watchers is that our constant nay-saying *may* have prevented even greater movement in that direction.

Kelly's testimony in June 1984 reflected the scholarly and intelligence communities' consensus on the potential of the PRC arms market, for example, but did not really address the *desirability* of arms sales. That more important issue was addressed in the congressional workshop in late 1981 (see note 16), and indicated that while the US arms industry was anxious to sell to China, China military watchers were extremely cautious. Today, however, American policy appears to be based on the *a priori* assumption that arms sales and military cooperation are desirable. The questions being asked of American China military watchers by policy-makers in 1986 concern "how much, what kind, and how"; but not "if." Even the uniformed military seems to have finally caught the fever.[49] High-level "China card" thinking has spawned programs that have acquired lives of their own; with them arise career opportunities for civilian and military officials. The result seems to be that China military watchers within the Defense Department are now jumping on the bandwagon, consciously or unconsciously preferring to be "team players." Policy trends seem to be influencing them, rather than the opposite.

Conclusion

By way of summary, I will paraphrase Harvey Nelsen's summation at the Washington conference: The "bad news" is that we still know rather little about how Chinese military decisions are made. We are still trying to describe structures and functions—just as we were in the 1960's. "Our consensus may be wide, but it isn't very deep."[50] "Better news," said Nelsen, is that we have a pretty good grasp on Chinese military science and technology, and on civil-military relations. At that conference, with Parris Chang as the sole dissenter, there was indeed consensus on civil-military relations. As I have indicated above, however, Nelsen was wrong. There is a minority of China military watchers with strongly conflicting opinions.

The "good news," said Nelsen, is that China military watchers share a consensus on Chinese strategic priorities and long-range policy as well as on short- and long-term modernization policy and resource allocation. "More bad news," however, is that PLA modernization will ultimately be bad for the United States, further complicating that superpower's security interests in Asia and worldwide.

But the most interesting news of all may be that there is very little any one country can do to affect PLA modernization. The Chinese have developed lots of foreign contacts, trade, and resources. They have lots of options.

[49]The climate of opinion among American military officers is easier to feel than to document, but it has palpably shifted. In the late 1970's, I heard many senior and middle-grade officers express strong reservations about any sort of US-PRC military relationship. One flag-rank officer in a Joint Command headquarters actually referred to the Chinese as "the enemy" in a 1978 conversation. Since then, Defense Secretaries Harold Brown (1980) and Caspar Weinberger (1983), Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General John Vessey (1985), and at least two dozen generals and deputy secretaries have visited the PRC. The US Navy seemed most recalcitrant about the "China card" until Secretary of the Navy John Lehman's 1984 visit. Admiral James Watkins, the Chief of Naval Operations, visited in May 1986, and the Navy currently gives the impression of "leading the charge" on the technology transfer.

[50]Telephone discussion with Harvey Nelsen, July 1985.

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Books

PCI Weighs Soviet Foreign Policy

John A. Baker

ADRIANO GUERRA. *Dopo Breznev* (After Brezhnev). Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1983.

ADRIANO GUERRA. *Il giorno che Chruscev parlo* (The Day Khrushchev Spoke). Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1986.

ARMANDO COSSUTTA. *Dissenso e unità* (Dissent and Unity). Milan, Editori Nicola Teti, 1986.

GIAN CARLO PAJETTA. *Le crisi che ho vissutto: Budapest, Prague, Varsavia* (The Crises I Have Experienced: Budapest, Prague, Warsaw). Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1982.

ITALIAN COMMUNISTS analyzing Soviet policy toward Europe face a persisting quandary. For them, as for the founders of their party who thought the Bolshevik revolution would spread across Central Europe toward Italy, seeing communism recede or fail in Eastern Europe is strategically unwelcome. Yet, its maintenance or restoration by violence, as in Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Poland (1981), is unhelpful in the extreme to the domestic political momentum of the Italian Communist Party (PCI).[1] Indeed, the impact of each successive application of violence since 1956 has caused the party to be torn between the conflicting reactions of a shocked Italian electorate, on the one hand, and an initially vocal (1950's) but later dwindling and aging (1970's and 1980's) pro-Soviet element within its ranks on the other.

One solution to the party's quandary of how to restore its flagging electoral momentum and prevent party fragmentation would be to return openly and completely to the fold of European socialists (descendants of the despised Second International) via the eclectic "Euroleft," a concept now receiving more attention in the PCI press than does "Eurocommunism." In fact, the PCI, which characterizes itself as an "integral part of the European Left," is edging toward such a solution. Ultimately, however, this solution would require a break with the party's historic communist identity. This might produce a disaffection in the left of the party's following, which could be exploited by radical movements and, perhaps, by Soviet-supported factions, as has occurred in Spain.

It would be easier for the PCI, of course, if a more humane, democratic form of communist rule were to arrive in Eastern Europe of the type Alexander Dubček forecast in Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring of 1968. The desire of Italian Communists for this solution, and the chronic wishful thinking about the "reformability" of the Soviet model of socialism it engenders, place a continuing burden on those within the party foreign affairs elite who know better than to expect such change.

Members of that elite, especially those who have spent time in the Soviet Union, know that significant change in Eastern Europe requires a Soviet leadership capable of contemplating reform and evolution without giving in to anxiety about discipline deemed essential for a competitive Soviet superpower. Without such significant reform, fundamental change in Soviet foreign

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[1] In fact, PCI analysts are now beginning to point out that the source of current problems plaguing the communist movement in Eastern Europe lies in the violence, or threat of violence, employed during the installation of postwar communist regimes in that area, for example, as happened with the emasculation of Stanisław Mikołajczyk's Polish Peasant Party in the 1947 elections in Poland and the Czechoslovak coup in February 1948.

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policy is doubtful and easily reversible, should it begin to occur. Yet, CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachëv, despite his able public diplomacy, shows no evidence of tolerating pluralism in Eastern Europe, much less in the USSR. This has reinforced reservations, formed among the PCI foreign affairs elite after the 1968 Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, about the possibility of internal Soviet political reform.

This view is not shared by those few leaders and members of the party nostalgic for a strong link to Moscow and by some of the younger, less historically conscious leaders. The former group, however, failed to move the party leadership at the recent 17th PCI Congress (April 1986) away from its basic position of reserve toward Moscow. The latter group, not wishing to be identified with the pro-Soviet element, withdrew certain anti-American amendments at the Congress after these were endorsed by the pro-Soviet group.

The four books under review here illustrate the diverse viewpoints within the Italian Communist Party that have emerged as a result of the quandary it faces. Two books, Adriano Guerra's *Il giorno che Chruscev parlo* and Armando Cossutta's *Dissenso e unità,* were published this year on the eve of the PCI's 17th Congress in Florence. The other two, Guerra's *Dopo Breznev* and Gian Carlo Pajetta's *Le crisi che ho vissuto* date back to the period of the 16th Congress in Milan (1983) and the preparations for it. Of the three authors, Pajetta has the most readable and spirited style, while Guerra shows the most flair for interesting analysis.

IN HIS TWO BOOKS, Adriano Guerra, director of the party's Center for the Study of International Politics (CESPI), a policy think tank established in 1978 by the late PCI Secretary General Enrico Berlinguer, presents views that are close to Berlinguer's 1980-81 critique of Soviet foreign policy as a "policy of power."[2] Yet, he does not presume to lay down an official party line. In fact, his analysis, which draws on his experiences as a journalist assigned to Poland and the USSR, and on his service as a member of the party's foreign policy elite, differs on some points from and is generally more cautious than the one set forth in the official party documents drafted in 1980-81 under Berlinguer's aegis by Guerra's predecessor at CESPI, Romano Ledda.

Guerra argues in *Dopo Breznev* that in 1975 the Soviet Union saw the United States as liberated militarily and politically by its withdrawal from Vietnam: militarily, because it was freed of its commitments to Vietnam in terms of forces and funds; politically, because its need for détente with the USSR decreased and it could concentrate on pursuing further rapprochement with China (a process that originated during the Vietnam war and accelerated after Mao Zedong's death in September 1976). According to Guerra, the Soviets perceived growing US efforts to accent the human rights issues in the "Third Basket" of the Helsinki Agreement (1975) as an indication of the United States's lessening need for détente. This, he maintains, caused the Soviets to fear that the political momentum they had gained in the early 1970's from strategic parity with the United States, as well as from détente, would be lost. As a result, the Soviets focused their attention on the Third World and on the leadership of the revolutionary currents there by supporting politically sympathetic but hard-pressed liberation movements.

In short, Guerra sees the Soviets' use of arms assistance and proxy forces in the Third World, as well as the eventual commitment of Soviet forces to Afghanistan, as a response to circumstances that the Soviet leaders feared might be exploited by the United States or China to reverse Soviet gains abroad. Some examples of such circumstances were: the threat to the Marxist liberation movement in Angola; the Chinese threat, as perceived by Hanoi, to Vietnam's drive for hegemony in Southeast Asia; the threat to Haile-Mariam Mengistu from Somali-supported insurgents; and the threat to the shaky communist government in Kabul resulting from internecine party struggles and from broad opposition from Islamic fundamentalists. Guerra places less emphasis than had Ledda on Soviet willingness to use force in Africa and Asia as being a function of the American "Vietnam syndrome"—that is, American reluctance to counter force with force in the Third World in defense of a bipolar global balance of power.

Unlike other analysts, who view the deployment of SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles targeted on Western Europe as designed to compensate for Moscow's declining political hold on Eastern Europe, Guerra gives relatively little attention to it. He evidently shares the widely held perception among PCI elites that this deployment was a mindless concession by the Soviet party leadership to the powerful military, which was anxious to preserve its hard-won nuclear parity. Convinced by its intelligence on American missile technology, the military believed that by 1977 the United States was irrevocably set on a course of "modernizing" its intermediate-range

[2]This term surfaced in mid-1978 when the erstwhile director of CESPI, Romano Ledda, applied it to Soviet policy in the Horn of Africa. Later, Berlinguer used it in discussing Soviet foreign policy leading up to and including the invasion of Afghanistan. Ledda again used the term in the officially adopted report to the PCI Central Committee on October 6, 1981.

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missile forces in Western Europe by introducing Pershing II's. (Soviet sources have now admitted to PCI interlocutors that early deployment of SS-20's was a serious error.)[3]

Guerra's analysis of the Soviet "policy of power" during the years 1975–78 is kinder to the Soviets—if by nothing else but by its attribution of primarily defensive motives to Soviet foreign policy—than that developed by his predecessors in CESPI. Furthermore, like most PCI analysts, he also sees Soviet use and advocacy of force in Afghanistan in 1980 and in Poland in 1981 as motivated by defensive security concerns. This type of analysis provided the underpinning to the PCI's vigorous opposition to any punitive sanctions against the USSR by the West. The PCI leaders believed that such sanctions threatened the international context of détente that they needed for their domestic strategy of coalition-building.

But Guerra does not spare the Soviets for having found themselves in a situation in which their security and global competitiveness depended on repeated use of Soviet or proxy forces. He links the development of this situation directly to the declining political appeal of the Soviet model of communism. Hence, he fully supports Berlinguer's judgment, made in the wake of the declaration of martial law in Poland, that the Soviet model has "exhausted its propulsive force." In some respects, Guerra's analysis is a more palatable explanation for a party which, since 1956, had clearly differentiated itself from the Soviet model of socialism but which had continued, right down through 1968 and beyond, to identify with the main lines of Soviet foreign policy, avoiding any global critique of it until after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

THE PUBLICATION of Guerra's *Il giorno che Chruscev parlo* (January 1986) appears to have been timed to coincide with the preparations for the congresses of both the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (February 1986) and of the PCI (April 1986). It is worth noting that one of the first reviews of this book, written by Paolo Spriano (the PCI's most respected historian) for Italy's premier noncommunist daily, *Corriere della Sera* of Milan, focused almost exclusively on the book's appendix, which consists of the full text of Khrushchev's secret speech of February 25, 1956. Spriano, who has periodically criticized his party for insufficient effort at educating its members about the nature of Soviet reality, gives predominant attention to the horrors Khrushchev revealed in his speech. He thereby underlines what he identifies to be the main thrust of Guerra's book, that is, the paradox that, less than a year after his exposure of Stalin, Khrushchev had become the "repressor of the Hungarian revolt, the guardian of the empire inherited from the despot he execrated."[4]

The appearance of *Il giorno che Chruscev parlo* just one month prior to the 27th CPSU Congress (billed by some as the most significant since the 20th Congress) and three months before the PCI Congress (also advertised as the most significant one since the 8th Congress in December 1956)[5] can hardly be seen as coincidental. The author's carefully researched account of the events of 1956 carries the message that hopes for change elicited at the 20th Congress by the newly ascendant Khrushchev were considerably reduced in dimension before the year was out. The series of internal and external reactions to Khrushchev's dramatic policy pronouncements and shocking revelations produced events that eventually compelled Khrushchev to resort to armed force in defense of the Soviet position in Central Europe and of his own uncertain position in the struggle for leadership in the Kremlin.

The degree to which Khrushchev's position was uncertain, even at the 20th CPSU Congress where important policy shifts bearing his imprint were announced, is accented by Guerra's treatment of the delicate timing of the secret speech. Developing a clue from Zhores and Roy Medvedev's *Chruscev: Gli anni del potere* (Khrushchev: The Years of Power, Milan, Mondadori, 1977), Guerra argues that the timing actually depended on the precise moment when the "anti-party group,"[6] for whom the relevation of Stalin's crimes and errors was most damaging, was vulnerable. That moment came when the CPSU Presidium (the Politburo) was without a mandate—that is, after its mandate had expired with the conclusion of the 20th Congress and before a new Presidium had been selected by the Central Committee emerging from the Congress. Guerra accepts the

[3]This information is based on statements by several members of the PCI Central Committee who specialize in Soviet affairs, made to the author in the spring of 1985.

[4]*Corriere della Sera* (Milan), Jan. 12, 1986.

[5]The 8th Congress took place amid substantial turmoil in the PCI and the defection of one-tenth of its two million members, including many of its leading intellectuals. The causes of this internal crisis were precisely the events which followed Khrushchev's speech and which Guerra describes toward the end of his book: Khrushchev's suppression of the Hungarian uprising and the reluctant but clear endorsement of that act by the erstwhile PCI leader, Palmiro Togliatti, as a necessary means of preventing a rollback of communism in East-Central Europe.

[6]The "anti-party group" consisted of those members of the CPSU Presidium led by Vyacheslav Molotov, Lazar' Kaganovich, and Georgiy Malenkov, who would have succeeded in pushing Khrushchev out of his leading position in June of 1957 had he not convened the Central Committee, which confirmed his leadership and branded his rivals as being "anti-party." When all members of this group were finally identified, it became apparent that in June of 1957 Khrushchev was in the minority on the Presidium.

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hypothesis of Guiseppe Boffa, CESPI's president and a historian on the CPSU, that the narrow window of time available to Khrushchev was the morning of February 25. The Congress had already concluded its formal public sessions, but the delegates had not yet left Moscow and could still be convened hastily and secretly in the Kremlin.

Guerra amply demonstrates that Khrushchev's incomplete hold on power in 1956 led to his utilization of the secret speech as a tool in his struggle for power until briefings on the speech were suddenly halted in the spring of 1956. The speech only exacerbated the Kremlin's leadership struggle, and Khrushchev's use of the anti-Stalin material did not put an end to the struggle. The author's treatment of the sequence of events following the Congress also shows that the publication of the speech by *The New York Times* (June 4, 1956) magnified the effect on Eastern Europe and the French and Italian Communist parties of the 20th Congress's policy shifts toward "non-inevitability of war" and "national roads to socialism."

Guerra's discussion of the dramatic days of the Hungarian uprising in the fall of 1956 is sensitive and characteristically cautious. He is critical of the "wavering" and "inadequate" role played by Imre Nagy, who became prime minister in the wake of the confusion and fear that enveloped the Hungarian party after the highly emotional popular response to the October 23 demands enunciated by members of the Petöfi circle.[7] Guerra is at pains to point out that while the sieges of the radio station and the party newspaper which began on October 23 were "insurrectional" in nature, their purpose was to obtain publicity for the demonstrators' demands. There were no acts of violence, and no persons were hurt until Soviet forces were employed—apparently with the acquiescence (now confirmed by Andras Hegedüs, the Hungarian prime minister who was replaced by Imre Nagy on October 24, 1956) of the frightened Hungarian party leadership.

But Nagy, Guerra observes, was unable to control the events that followed the initial Soviet intervention. "What happened in Budapest between October 24 and the beginning of November" Guerra asserts, "was characterized by the on-the-scene presence of decisively reactionary and rightist forces" (p. 197). Among the "forces" he cites are Cardinal Mindszenty, who refused to recognize the legitimacy of Nagy's government in a radio message of November 3; Radio Free Europe which purportedly opposed the Nagy government; and renegades involved in "white terror and anticommunist pogroms"(p. 196).

Yet, the "reactionary right" did not play the decisive role that official Soviet and Hungarian documents attributed to it, states Guerra. What ultimately counted was the lack of unity among the majority of those "who did not want any type of capitalist restoration" and "wouldn't have permitted it to occur." (Guerra quotes from a December 2, 1983, interview with György Krasso, a leading participant in the events of 1956. The interview appeared in the Hungarian *samizdat*.) Guerra focuses on the workers' councils as a force that Nagy should have co-opted more successfully, but he fails to substantiate his assertion that it was the councils and the revolutionary committees that pushed Nagy to denounce the Warsaw Pact "at the moment at which internal and international factors perhaps worked in favor of a negotiated solution" (p. 195). Guerra thus ignores the argument, currently made by others in the PCI,[8] that Nagy's bid for neutrality on November 1 was a desperate appeal triggered by the information that, despite the agreement of October 30 worked out with Soviet representatives Anastas Mikoyan and Mikhail Suslov, Soviet armed forces were already heading back toward Budapest and reinforcements were crossing Hungary's eastern border.

That Khrushchev had to endorse intervention in Hungary in November 1956 not only to preserve unchallengeable Soviet influence in Eastern Europe but also his own primacy in the CPSU leadership was an obvious lesson for his successors. At the 27th CPSU Congress, Gorbachëv's calls for "radical reform" were followed by a severe lecture by Viktor Chebrikov, the KGB representative on the Politburo, on how dissenters would be dealt with in the future should they dare raise their heads. The lesson is that traditional Bolshevik concepts of rule die hard and that those who attempt to reform them too abruptly may either have to trim their sails or reap the whirlwind. This message was not lost on the PCI, which published a front-page report in the party paper *L'Unità* by its Moscow correspondent on Chebrikov's counterpoint to Gorbachëv's call for "radical reform."

One might conclude that perhaps Guerra chose to write about the historic events of 1956 as a reminder that the appearance of a new Soviet leader advocating change and improvement does not necessarily

[7]The Petöfi Circle consisted of a group of Hungarian intellectuals whose gathering in Budapest at the statue of a Polish statesman was intended to show symbolic support of Gomułka's successful accession to power in Warsaw. The gathering promoted a set of demands for liberalization in Hungary. These demands immediately generated popular support and calls for their publication and broadcasting. This was an unprecedented challenge to the Hungarian party and led it to call for the "assistance" of Soviet armed forces in Budapest.

[8]For example, Fedorigo Argentieri of the Eastern European division of the Gramsci Institute.

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guarantee meaningful reforms in the near future; nor does it guarantee renewed appeal and efficacy for the Soviet model of socialism that would allow it to survive and prosper without periodic use of repressive force. This message would seem to be consistent with the thrust of Guerra's *Dopo Breznev*, namely, that the militarization of Soviet foreign policy is basically a function of Soviet failure to reform internally and of its vulnerability to liberalizing East European responses to any serious internal reform effort in the USSR.

Guerra's specific message to thoughtful participants in the deliberations prior to and during the PCI Congress could be summarized as follows: despite frustrations that result from the low priority accorded détente in US foreign policy, there are no solid reasons to alter the PCI's skeptical view of the Soviet model, Gorbachëv's promising words and hopeful intentions notwithstanding. The PCI's identification with the West European Left (whose voting strength outside of Italy now owes little to communist parties), is thus the right one and in fact the only one for a party wishing to count within a Western democratic system.

IDEOLOGY rather than analysis appears to underlie the work of Armando Cossutta, whose most recent book *Dissenso e unità* appeared early in 1986, almost simultaneously with Guerra's *Il giorno che Chruscev parlo*. Cossutta's book is a collection of articles and Central Committee speeches from the 1982-85 period. It constitutes a political effort to call the party back to its anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist ideological roots, from which, Cossutta contends, it has broken away. According to him, Ledda's officially endorsed global critique of the Soviet "policy of power" in October 1981 and Berlinguer's devastating critique of the Soviet model of socialism three months later represented such a "break."

Cossuta's volume continues the theme of his earlier book, *Lo Strappo* (The Break), published in 1982 as part of Cossutta's unsuccessful effort to prevent the PCI's 16th Congress from endorsing Berlinguer's critique. It begins with the five amendments to Berlinguer's thesis that Cossutta presented to the 16th Congress and ends with repeated calls for the next (17th) Congress to revise or abandon the "equidistant" positions adopted by the previous Congress.

Cossutta wants to reposition the PCI unequivocally within the ranks of a world communist movement which, he insists, still exists, despite its inability to convene as such since 1969. He wants to reverse the growing rapprochement with the European noncommunist left in general, and the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD) in particular. He feels that this rapprochement has blurred the party's basic anticapitalist identity and mission.

While the 17th Congress did indeed assume a more explicitly critical posture toward the Reagan administration and its policies, and make favorable references to Soviet disarmament initiatives, it cannot be said to have advanced the objectives outlined by Cossutta in *Dissenso e unità*. Instead of underlining the communist nature of the party, the dominant theme of the Congress was the PCI's identification as an "integral part of the European Left" (an objective to which Gorbachëv now even aspires). The greatest novelty at the Congress was the attendance for the first time of official representatives from several major West European socialist parties. And, according to one observer at the Congress, Joan Urban, author of the authoritative volume *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party* (Cornell University Press, 1986), the focus of attention, despite Cossutta's appeals, was not on the high-ranking Soviet delegate (nor on the Chinese Communist emissary, who refused to remain seated next to him), but on the SPD delegation.

Responding to pressure from within the party, as well as from noncommunists who contrast the PCI's professed belief in pluralism with its continued practice of a modified "democratic centralism" and its rejection of factionalism, the PCI has indeed developed a unique tolerance for dissent. However, as Cossutta was to discover, the degree of this tolerance is not yet so liberal as to accept the type of "dissent" implied in the title of his book. Not only did the party's main publishing house, Editori Riuniti, not publish his book but, to Cossutta's evident annoyance, he was not reelected to the party's 39-man directorate.

GIAN CARLO PAJETTA's *Le crisi che ho vissuto*, which appeared in 1982 before the 16th Congress, presents neither a carefully reasoned historical argument, nor an ideological argument. What the author offers is basically an anecdotal, sometimes sentimental, but frequently colorful series of clearly selective reminiscences[9] of events of the international communist movement in the postwar period. Pajetta, the leading, living political participant in those events, writes about Stalin's death and funeral, at which the PCI delegation demonstrated more emotional grief than did their Soviet hosts; PCI leader Palmiro Togliatti's encouragement in the spring of 1956 of Yugoslav autonomy *within* the

[9]The book contains reminiscences not included in *La lunga marcia dell'internazionalismo* (The Long March of Internationalism–Editori Riuniti, 1978), a volume containing a lengthy interview with Pajetta on which the interviewer, Ottavio Cecchi, imposed a more ordered analysis of events.

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movement (unity with diversity); Khrushchev's historic but not fully successful effort at reconciliation with Tito; and the Soviet intervention in 1956 to suppress the Hungarian "counterrevolution" (a word Pajetta claims never to have used for those events) and the PCI's reluctant endorsement of it spurred on by its pro-Soviet membership and even, as Pajetta claims, Tito's fears of Western penetration into Hungary.

Pajetta also recounts the events of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. According to him, August 20, 1968, found the top PCI leadership, Pajetta included, vacationing serenely in the USSR, their anxieties, as well as those of most other Westerners, assuaged by the bilateral Soviet-Czechoslovak meeting on their common border and by its sequel, the Warsaw Pact meeting in Bratislava in early August. Pajetta (who does not acknowledge the reluctance attributed to him to participate in the PCI's initial August 21 critique of the Soviet intervention) remarks that PCI relations with "Soviet comrades" since that time have been dialectical, while those with the Czechoslovak Communist leadership that defended the intervention have been virtually nonexistent. Pajetta also manages to discuss the Solidarity movement and the declaration of martial law in Poland on December 13, 1981, but without once quoting Berlinguer's dramatic judgment that the propulsive force of the Soviet model of socialism was exhausted. He vigorously denies that the critique represented a "break" with party traditions.

Except for the 10-page Epilogue dealing with the PCI's argument with the Soviets over martial law in Poland, Pajetta's book deals exclusively with events prior to the mid-1970's. In essence a personal memoir, written in a spirited, conversational style, it is valuable more as an eyewitness account of events than as historical analysis. It appears to have been assembled shortly after the Berlinguerian critique and the PCI's estrangement from the Soviet Union in 1981 over issues of both foreign policy and the unreformed domestic Soviet model. Despite his role as senior foreign affairs leader, Pajetta is not believed to have been as significant a participant in this process of estrangement as were Romano Ledda, Giorgio Napolitano, and others.

It is not clear whether Pajetta's purpose in writing *Le crisi che ho vissuto* was to underline the PCI's distancing from Moscow by reminiscing about the historical events that led to it, or whether it was to identify himself—but not too specifically—with a critique of the Soviet Communist Party, something which may not have rested comfortably with his years as a committed anti-imperialist closely aligned with Soviet foreign policy. Perhaps it was a combination of the two, since Pajetta has been loyal to both his party and a vision of internationalism that always leaves a door open to the leading "anti-imperialist" power. The ambivalent nature of PCI policy toward the Soviet Union, which Pajetta, as party foreign affairs coordinator, has come to symbolize, has been reduced after the 17th Congress by the replacement of Pajetta by Giorgio Napolitano, leader of the PCI's "right" and prominent actor in the courtship of the European (and American) left of Center, particularly the SPD.

THE FOUR BOOKS reviewed above were written by Italian Communists with different personalities, professional training, orientation, and style. They belong to the generation of Italian communists once active in the wartime resistance and liberation, who are currently dominant in the party leadership. That such varied views coexist at rather high levels of the PCI's decision-making machinery should surprise no one who is familiar with that party or, for that matter, with Italy. That they have emerged within a certain time frame tells us quite a bit about the process under way in the PCI.

Despite episodic criticism of Soviet excesses, the party took a long time arriving at a critical global judgment of Soviet foreign policy, calling it in 1980-81 a "policy of power." Its discovery that the Soviet model of socialism had lost its appeal was novel only because the discoverers still called themselves Communists. Yet, the party's ability to reach and enunciate these judgments has helped it hold its own in Italy during a wave of change in European politics in which few other politically significant communist parties have been able to maintain their organizational strength and electoral support.

The PCI hopes to conserve its strength and to be ready for the next swing of the political pendulum to the left, even if this swing does not occur until the end of the current decade or some time in the next one. Whether or not this will be possible depends to a considerable degree on what image of socialism the Soviet Union will project into Western Europe and what kind of foreign policy the reality behind that image will foster and allow.

Should this reality, that is, the Soviet model of socialism, not change significantly, the PCI will have to face future Soviet-inflicted embarrassment to the banner of the hammer and sickle that the PCI still carries—unless, in the meantime, it finds itself a fully accepted place within a predominantly noncommunist European Left. The absence of any mention of Lenin or Leninism at the recent 17th PCI Congress, and the scarce references even to Marx, is indicative of the party's continuing movement in that direction.

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GDR Dichotomies

David Childs

ELMAR DIETER OTTO. *Nachrichten in der DDR: Eine empirische Untersuchung über Neues Deutschland* (News in the GDR: An Empirical Analysis of *Neues Deutschland*). Cologne, Wissenschaft und Politik, 1979.

GABRIELE ECKART. *So sehe ich die Sache: Protokolle aus der DDR* (This Is How I See Things: Protocols from the GDR). Cologne, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1984.

GISELA HELWIG. *Jugend und Familie in der DDR: Leitbild und Alltag im Widerspruch* (Youth and Family in the GDR: Conflict Between Ideal and Reality). Cologne, Special Edition of *Deutschland Archiv*, 1984.

G. E. EDWARDS. *GDR Society and Institutions: Facts and Figures.* London, Macmillan, 1985.

ARTHUR W. McCARDLE and A. BRUCE BOENAU, Eds. *East Germany: A New German Nation Under Socialism?* Washington, DC, University Press of America, 1984.

FRANZ LOESER. *Die unglaubwürdige Gesellschaft: Quo Vadis, DDR?* (The Incredible Society: Quo Vadis, GDR?). Cologne, Bund-Verlag, 1984.

AS THE German Democratic Republic (GDR) celebrated 40 years of "liberation" in the autumn of 1985 an air of uncertainty hung heavily over the territory between the Oder and the Elbe. Amid rumors that party leader Erich Honecker might step down to make way for a younger man—one presumably able to accept more readily the role of subaltern to the new ringmaster in Moscow—party functionaries braced themselves for the 11th Congress of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) set for April 17–21, 1986. But, as events of the congress show, Honecker did not allow himself to be put in the dustbin of history. Instead, he strengthened his own position in the Politburo and ensured the continuation of an era he had set in motion in 1971.[1]

The key posts in the party remained firmly in the hands of the apparatchiki, most of whom are old and some of whom are sick. Honecker and Kurt Hager (responsible for culture and science) are 74; the second- and third-ranking members in the SED hierarchy, Willi Stoph and Horst Sindermann, are 72 and 71 respectively. And Hermann Axen, the chairman of Foreign Affairs in the Volkskammer (parliament), is 70. Moreover, Honecker loyalists Werner Eberlein, Siegfried Lorenz, and General Heinz Kessler were elected to full membership on the party's Politburo.[2]

The 11th SED Congress praised the CPSU and its 27th Party Congress, but rejected General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachëv's call for self-criticism in combatting stagnation, complacency, and corruption. Instead, the SED congratulated itself on its many achievements since the 10th Congress of 1975. Honecker, for his part, made much of the

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[1]To many observers, Honecker's tenacity came as no surprise. In November, he had been able to oust Konrad Naumann, a vocal critic, from the Politburo and from his post as first secretary of the Berlin SED organization. His successor, Günter Schabowski, already a member of the Politburo, was Honecker's personal nominee. In addition, Herbert Häber, an advocate of a more friendly line toward West Germany, was also dropped from the Politburo—perhaps as a sop to Moscow.

[2]These leadership changes should not be cause for concern in the Kremlin. Indeed, two of the new appointees are well-known in Moscow. Eberlein spent his youth in the Soviet Union (where his father disappeared), and in his younger years he was often called upon to serve as an interpreter at meetings of top Soviet and GDR leaders. Kessler, whose father was a Communist, deserted to the Red Army from the Wehrmacht in 1941 and became a cofounder of the National Committee for a Free Germany (NKFD).

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SED's victories in developing the GDR's economy and raising the people's standard of living.

Such actions were quite unexpected. The SED had always been fairly orthodox in following the Soviet line. In the past, it had at least paid lip service to self-criticism, even if it had not taken it seriously in practice. During the past year, there had been signs that this pattern would be repeated at the 1986 congress. It was not.

Will the proceedings of the congress find resonance in the real life of the GDR? Outwardly, of course, the GDR authorities project the usual calm. The media record new victories on the production front, more homes built, more teachers trained, more books published, more holidays taken. Life, it seems, is getting better and better.

Some, however, see a different reality. Doris Cornelsen of the German Institute for Economic Research in West Berlin, for example, concludes in her excellent study of the East German economy, 1981–85, that while the GDR has had some success in reducing its foreign debt, the consumer has had to pay for this, especially in 1982 and 1983, which were particularly bad years.[3] Indeed, buried in Honecker's speech to the congress was the warning that consumer goods of high quality would be sold at prices that "yield the necessary profit for the manufacturer and society at large."[4] He also warned that exports to the USSR were a significant precondition toward ensuring future imports of raw materials, fuels, machinery, and installations and plants from the Soviet Union. The difficulty, however, is that the GDR must import Western technology in order to improve the quality of its exports. But it cannot pay for such imports in rubles. How, then, can it earn the necessary deutschmarks, yen, and dollars to pay for necessary imports from the West if it has to export ever larger quantities of higher quality goods to the USSR? Solving this conundrum remains the top priority for the SED's economic experts.

BUT THE SED and the East German media will keep the GDR public oblivious of this problem. Only the need for more exports is stressed in public. Reverses for consumers are not reported in the GDR press and other media, for, as SED propagandist Hermann Budzislawski explains in his essay on socialist journalism (in McCardle and Boenau), the socialist journalist will structure his news so that "the morale of his class is strengthened" (p. 333).

Yet, the GDR media find this most difficult to achieve because they rarely report the news the population is interested in. For example, when so many people East and West of the Elbe were concerned with the widespread strikes in Poland, the August 26, 1980, issue of *Tribüne,* the organ of the East German trade unions, ignored events there and instead devoted two and one-half pages (out of eight) to an interview given by Honecker to the British publisher Robert Maxwell, who was publishing the General Secretary's autobiography. More recently, when the world outside the Warsaw Pact was horrified by the news of the Chernobyl' nuclear disaster, the April 29, 1986, edition of the SED party paper, *Neues Deutschland,* kept this news from its front page. Instead, it gave its readers the good news that the GDR trade union would be holding its 11th congress in April 1987—one year hence! This story shared the front page with the news that the West German Communist Party was publishing a book of Honecker's speeches, and that Honecker had sent greetings to the Emperor of Japan in honor of that country's national day. Chernobyl' was mentioned on page 5, where it was accorded about one square inch of space.

Such practices obviously help to destroy the media's credibility, a credibility that is further shaken by their occasional abrupt change of attitude toward a particular individual or state. This happened in the case of the late Shah of Iran, who, as the price of oil soared, went from a "murderer" and "US puppet" to a welcomed guest of the GDR government. (Ironically, shortly before his overthrow, the Shah was scheduled to visit the GDR, where both he and his wife were to receive honorary doctorates.) It also happened following Honecker's visit to Japan in 1981. Thereafter, notes Franz Loeser in his autobiography under review here, the GDR media had to jettison their earlier characterization of that country as an instrument of US imperialism in favor of a new, positive attitude (p. 76). More recently, the GDR media has found it difficult to respond to events in South Yemen, a state about which they had given much misleading information in the past. Part of their problem, as Elmar Dieter Otto shows in his analysis of *Neues Deutschland*'s news coverage, is that they often rely on TASS or other Soviet sources rather than attempt their own assessments.

THE UNREAL world of the GDR media features in a number of the interviews conducted by Gabriele Eckart in the GDR in the early 1980's. Her method is that of Studs Terkel—tape-recorded intereviews of a cross-section of a community (in this case agricultural) in which the interviewees tell about their lives in an

[3]Doris Cornelsen, "The Economy of the GDR, 1981–1985," in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, Beilage zur Wochenzeitung Des Parlaments* (Bonn), Jan. 25, 1986.

[4]See Honecker's report to the Central Committee, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Eastern Europe* (Washington, DC), Apr. 21, 1986, pp. E/9–56.

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unstructured way. The project, it should be mentioned, was not meant to be anti-GDR, but on completion SED leaders evidently thought it too risky and publication was canceled. Eventually, Eckart's study found its way into West Germany, where it was published.

The book is interesting, and the interviews—21 of them—appear authentic, but it must be remembered that the subjects thought (rightly so) that they were being interviewed by a loyal citizen of the GDR with official blessing. In many cases at least, this would have led to self-censorship by the interviewees, although this apparently was not true of Inge, an 18-year-old gardener:

What I find good in our state is that you don't have to be afraid about your job. And with housing...you have to wait, but then you get one and not at such [high] rents as over there [in West Germany]. But in political matters everything's too restrictive for me. If you say one wrong word to the wrong person [you may find yourself in trouble]....There's one of them [party members] in our [work] brigade, so I don't talk about politics. And the press here, it's so that you don't hear about some things, crime, for instance. And a lot of things are so glorified, yet everyone sees [for] themselves how things are.

Complaints similar to those of a 57-year-old manager are also often heard in the GDR. He wants to be able to travel where he wants; and he is appalled by, among many other things, the fact that youngsters are not free to express themselves in school, and by SED meetings at which there is no real discussion, the questions having been worked out weeks in advance by the leadership. There is the 17-year-old apprentice and Free German Youth (FDJ) secretary who remarks that the church is the only place where one can stretch one's mind. And there is Heinz (21), also a gardener, who expresses strong reservations about the FDJ and its methods. He too criticizes the GDR's media, especially television, which he finds so exaggerated as to insult the intelligence of the people. As a result, he watches only shows from the West.

IN HER BOOK on youth and the family and the conflict between the ideal and reality, Gisela Helwig finds it useful to quote from a number of Eckart's interviews. She quotes Horst (34), the editor of a factory newspaper who is disgusted by the double standard prevalent in SED circles. He cites as an example the head teacher who owned a West German car (Volkswagen Golf) but who came down heavily on apprentices in her charge because of their interest in pictures of Western automobiles. Horst also criticizes the GDR educational system for its selectivity and privilege. Although he himself had been educated at an elite boarding school in Ludwigsfelde, he was unable to study or to try for the careers he would have liked, but was instead directed by the FDJ into journalism. He further expresses disgust over the way the parents of his fellow students, many of them diplomats, were able to secure special privileges for their offspring.

Helwig's own analysis of the educational system of the GDR tends to support Horst's criticisms. Her material reveals that the GDR's aim of providing equal opportunities for all has in no sense been realized. She quotes East German sources to show that the educational qualifications of the parents have greatly influenced the progress of their children. At the end of the 1970's, she notes, only 9 percent of students came from families in which either both parents were unskilled workers or only one of them was skilled. A further 20 percent came from families in which both parents were skilled workers. At the other end of the spectrum, 33 percent of students were from homes where either both parents were university graduates or one was and the other had completed a *Fachschule* (professional school) training. It goes without saying, of course, that in all cases, students and parents had passed the political reliability test.

Helwig skilfully uses a wide variety of sources, both GDR and West German, including reports issued over a period of 11 years by an investigating council of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR, which had been given the task of analyzing the position of women in socialist society. That the reports of a council of this kind are semi-secret, meant only to be read by a select circle of scholars and researchers within the Academy, reveals a great deal about the GDR.

Helwig's book is interesting and competent but contains no surprises. How could it? Are familial relationships so very different in different industrial societies? I believe not. In the GDR, however, the family is under greater pressure than in West Germany; far more mothers go out to work; many work shift work; housing is poor (it has improved in the last decade, notes Helwig, but much needs to be done); shopping is problematic; and the state interferes in daily life in ways that would be unacceptable in the West. Also, the already high rate of divorce keeps on rising. According to the *Statistisches Jahrbuch der DDR*[5] for 1985, the divorce rate per 10,000 of population rose from 14.2 in 1960 to 30.2 in 1984.

Unfortunately, there appear to be no GDR analyses of the causes of matrimonial breakdown in recent

[5]East Berlin, Staat-Verlag, 1985.

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years. G. E. Edwards addresses this important social issue but cites a GDR survey from 1974, the same one that had been published in an earlier book by Helwig.[6] According to this survey, adultery was the top reason for divorce (22 percent), followed by "incompatibility of character and views" (14.4 percent), problems with alcohol (10.4 percent), sexual problems (10.0 percent), physical violence (9.3 percent), and "married too quickly without knowing each other" (6.5 percent). But these causes are *in part* the result of larger socioeconomic factors. Heavy alcohol consumption, for example, can be traced partly to too much money chasing too few goods, boredom, loneliness, and bad housing driving people out of their homes and into bars. Adultery is made more likely when both partners work outside of the home and, in a considerable number of cases, work different shifts. Of course, the trends in the GDR are similar to those in other states on both sides of the ideological divide, but the SED, far from having any solutions to this and associated problems, cannot conceal the fact that "Marxism-Leninism" has no answers.

HELWIG'S attempt to confront the complex reality of the GDR is in sharp contrast to the picture presented by Edwards. Edwards, of Loughborough University in England, tells of "her own experience of twenty years of close observation of the East German scene and many visits to the country spread out over the period." She admits that "not many statistics are available on some topics, [and that] on others they may be incomplete for some years and for others again they may be completely unobtainable" (p. xvii). She also cautions readers that "GDR sources are sometimes overoptimistic in describing what is happening in their country and it is only by reading between the lines and knowing the country well that it is possible to assess where the problems lie" (p. xvii).

Alas, I do not find much evidence of her reading between the lines. In fact, Edwards seems all too ready to accept official explanations, values, and statistics without much questioning. She tells us in her chapter on youth, for instance, that "90 percent of young men who are eligible for military service belong on a voluntary basis" to the paramilitary Society for Sport and Technology, the GST (p. 124). Most Westerners who know the GDR, however, would question her use of the word "voluntary" in this context. (Indeed, if a GDR youth were to refuse to "volunteer," his or her chances for a meaningful or productive career would be virtually nil.) She goes on to say that "through the GST it is possible to learn to drive, navigate, dive and fly. Radio technical training, shooting and parachuting are also offered" (p. 125). It is well known, though, that shooting is an integral part of the basic training of the GST not an optional extra!

Edwards also seems to distort her picture of the GDR through omission. For example, she mentions that since September 1978 *Wehrkunde* (defense studies) has been introduced into all schools, but she fails to mention the controversy and anger among parents about its introduction. Readers hear about the SED's version of the peace movement but hear nothing about the genuine unofficial one. Edwards also takes seriously the statistic that 40 members of the Volkskammer are FDJ nominees aged 18–25. This would be of some significance if the 500-member Volkskammer were a real parliament!

Edwards's reliance on official GDR data produces several other distortions of reality. Despite her words of caution at the start of her book, she takes seriously GDR crime statistics and then places them in comparative perspective: "The crime rate in the GDR has been consistently lower than in Western countries (for instance some five to six times less crimes per 100,000 of population than is the case in the Federal Republic) and has not shown the explosion which Britain has experienced in the last decade . . ." (p. 153). But how can one compare crime statistics of such a tightly controlled society as the GDR with those of West Germany or Britain? Perhaps Edwards's efforts would have been better spent had she tried to find out why there is so much juvenile delinquency in the GDR, despite all the police, propaganda, controls, and regimentation.

The other chapters on the family, women, and the elderly suffer from the same defects. This should perhaps come as no surprise since all but one of the 70 or so sources listed in her bibliography appear to be East German. Moreover, Helwig's 1974 book from which she quotes is not even cited. It is a pity that a book that looks at areas neglected by British and American (but not West German) writers on the GDR is not more searching.

The volume edited by Arthur McCardle and Bruce Boenau suffers (though to a somewhat lesser degree) from the same weaknesses as that of Edwards. Although the editors have attempted to produce a reader covering a full range of topics—e.g., "Germany and the GDR," "The political system of the GDR," and "The society of the GDR"—the bulk of their book, which draws heavily on official GDR documents, allows the SED to present itself. Of the 23 articles, only four are not SED-orientated. And, despite the good intentions of the contributors, the es-

[6]See her *Frau '75* (Women, 1975), Cologne, n.p., 1975.

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says are filled with jargon and official propaganda. Given the vast body of critical literature on the GDR (including that by former and even current SED members), I would have thought that a more balanced presentation would have enhanced the book's effectiveness. Fortunately, the editors do raise pertinent questions at the end of each chapter, and this helps to round out the presentations and improve the book to a certain degree.

THIS IS NOT to say that the work of East German scholars should be ignored entirely. Indeed, as the studies by Helwig and Edwards indicate, SED experts are attempting more and more to use the same methods of research as social scientists in the West. Despite the progress since the 1960's, however, their situation remains a difficult one. Any material that could possibly give aid or comfort to "class enemies" must be kept secret—statistics on juvenile delinquency, suicides, and similar matters for instance—and no fundamental criticism of the system is tolerated.

This is made clear in Franz Loeser's *Die unglaubwürdige Gesellschaft,* a personal account written by a former insider, a man high up in the intellectual establishment who "knows many of the Politburo members personally" (p. 52). Loeser has had a varied life, which he recounts in the first part of his book. Of Jewish descent, he was born in Breslau in 1924. Most of his family perished in the holocaust. He ended World War II as a sergeant in the British army medical corps. He witnessed the horrors of Hiroshima in 1945 and the intolerance of McCarthyism in the United States a little later. It was the political atmosphere in the United States that led Loeser to return to Britain, and to studies at the University of Manchester and a job with one of England's largest department stores. But he had already decided he wanted to return to "democratic" Germany, and he spent several years waiting to be admitted. It was only the intervention of Harry Pollit, leader of the British Communist Party, that secured his passage, in 1956, and ensured a warm welcome for him and his British wife from SED leader Walter Ulbricht. He then rapidly ascended into the heaven and hell of the GDR's "new class." He was appointed professor of philosophy at Humboldt University, and "elected" a member of the Presidium of the Peace Council, chairman of the Paul Robeson Committee, and secretary of the SED at the Institute of Philosophy.

In part two of his book, Loeser takes the lid off the GDR's "real existing socialism." He has much of interest to relate. He mentions a survey on the effectiveness of *"Die Aktuelle Kamera,"* the most important news program on GDR television. When the program commenced at 7:30 pm, an estimated 3 percent were watching it. By 7:31, this had declined to a mere 0.2 percent. He pours scorn on the "feudal life-style of a feudal despot," the late Gerhard Grüneberg, czar of East German agriculture (p. 78). And he attacks the "pope" of GDR ideology, Kurt Hager, for his ignorance and arrogance and for having condemned GDR science to "servility and sterility" (p. 89).

Loeser reminds us how history has to be rewritten to fit in with the changes in the SED leadership. He condemns the hypocrisy of "democratic centralism," the failure of the economic system, and the SED's attitude of "anything goes" if it brings in hard currency. This includes everything from the sale of political prisoners to West Germany to the printing and export of pornographic literature banned in the GDR but thought suitable for the decadent West!

Loeser paints a depressing picture of the average GDR citizen. The degeneration of socialism, he says, has led to the degeneration of the human beings living under it. It has bred "a petit bourgeois philistine whose needs are not satisfied and whose personal freedom is limited. The consequence is that a frustrated, disillusioned, aggressive type of human being has developed, who tries to escape from his oppression, whenever possible, by withdrawing from public life behind his own four walls" (p. 115). Loeser claims that GDR citizens show their frustration by being far more aggressive and unfriendly in public than "the British, Japanese, Californians or citizens of Cologne" (people he has personally experienced).

ALTHOUGH MOST of what he writes has been written before by a wide variety of witnesses, some will find his picture of the GDR exaggerated. Some will regard him as an unreliable commentator, considering his own history of service to the SED. Others will see him as an alarmist, citing as evidence his warning that fear could lead to the establishment of a military dictatorship. Yet the fact is, Loeser has given up a great deal rather late in life to bear witness against the god that failed! Having met him, I am inclined to accept his testimony in its essentials. He is an important witness reminiscent of Wolfgang Leonhard.

It will be interesting for American readers to learn that his experiences have forced him to the conclusion that American "bourgeois democracy" is far more real than the fictitious democracy of "real existing socialism." Like others before him, he is trying to salvage as much of his past as possible by advocating a form of democratic socialism for the GDR. This, he believes, is what the youth between the Elbe and the Oder really want.

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Correspondence

NOTE: Readers are welcome to comment on matters discussed in this journal. Letters should be addressed to The Editors,
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ON NICARAGUA

TO THE EDITORS: May I comment on the important article "Sandinistas in Power" by Jiri and Virginia Valenta in your September-October 1985 issue. Such is the heat of debate in North America and Western Europe about Nicaragua that I must begin by stating that I am a friend of self-determination for small peoples, and not of the particular government they appear to have chosen in this case, namely Sandinismo. The Valentas' article is well-documented and transparently honest. I would appeal to the authors to write another addressing the following observations.

The 1984 election. It is good to see a *bien pensant* treatment that does not get hung up on Arturo Cruz's "not having been allowed to stand." This treatment states that "a most crucial aspect of the election was its lateness." It was, however, held within the five years promised by the Sandinistas when they seized power in 1979. Those who think 1984 was too late should have said so in 1979. Maybe the authors did; I do not know. Five years is not an abnormal time for revolutionary governments taking over in Third World countries. Consider Uganda now. Nobody is protesting.

The article says that the elections "offered the voter only a semblance of choice" and a little later correctly records that the rightwing opposition scored 29 percent. It seemed to me (and I was a member of two all-party observer teams from the British Parliament that visited Nicaragua at different times during 1984) that nearly a third of a people voting for the right opposition to a left revolutionary government indicates, and largely so, the reality of choice. Those who were not deterred by the obstacles Arturo Cruz and his allies found so daunting, and were prepared to get their hands dirty in democratic politics on the ground, did perfectly well.

Public ownership of land. The discussion here still needs to be raised a notch or two. The authors produce a table—and I am aware of the difficulties of doing statistics in any Third World country—that shows 100 percent of the land of Nicaragua having been in private ownership in 1978. I know the Somoza family were ruthless private exploiters as well as horrible dictators, but what about foreign embassies, for instance? And were Nicaraguan government buildings, barracks, etc., really all in the Somoza name?

The authors also show in this table that the "FSLN goal" is 25 percent private ownership. The authority for this is "Authors' interviews in Managua." I wonder with whom?

Armed forces. "Costa Rica is particularly vulnerable" to the Nicaraguan armed forces, "having only a paramilitary police force but no army." So it was to the Somoza regime. Nothing new in that. The new president of Costa Rica is now busy mending fences with Nicaragua.

The contras. "The anti-Sandinista insurgencies are symptomatic of conditions created by most Leninist-orientated regimes in the Third World." Maybe. They are also symptomatic of conditions created by most Central American governments at most times in the last 30 years. It seems obvious to the more distant eye of the West European in the 1980's that the main trouble the United States found with Sandinist Nicaragua was that instead of conforming to the approved pattern, namely rightwing government and leftwing insurgents, it reversed things—a leftwing government with rightwing insurgents.

China. Since the article was written, Nicaragua has established diplomatic relations with China. This affects some of the conclusions in the article.

Indeed, it is the *conclusion* of the article that looks to me to be cockeyed, and not borne out by what precedes it. The numerous unsuccessful attempts in Eastern Europe to make communism more pluralistic and more humane have all taken place in countries where communism was imposed by the Soviet Army, which happened to be on the scene because of joint Allied efforts to extirpate Nazism. And "communist" is the word that East European governments are proud to use. The Soviet army is not in Nicaragua, and "communist" is not a word that the Sandinistas use. Nevertheless, the authors believe that liberalization in Nicaragua seems

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precluded by something else, namely that "the FSLN regime has internalized Soviet and Cuban models of repression." For this argument to hold water, the authors would have to show that the East European governments had not internalized Soviet and Cuban models of repression. But they have.

The FSLN appears to be a coalition of nationalist leftwing revolutionaries, some of whom are pro-Soviet and some of whom are not. US aid to the contras would appear to play into the hands of the former at the expense of the latter.

WAYLAND KENNET, M.P.
Social Democratic Party
London

(Lord Kennet was a member of a three-member British Parliamentary Human Rights Group that visited Nicaragua in November 1984 to observe the elections. David Ashby, a Conservative M.P. and Alf Dubs, a Labour M.P. were the other members.—Eds.)

THE VALENTAS RESPOND: It is rewarding for scholars when an important public figure like Wayland Kennet of the Social Democratic Party and the British Parliament takes the time to read and respond thoughtfully to their writings. It was even more gratifying to find that Lord Kennet judged our article "important," "well-documented," and "transparently honest." To be sure, Lord Kennet counters these generous credits by taking the authors to task for what he describes as "cockeyed" conclusions. He further appeals to them to write another article addressing a number of his own observations. For the time being, however, we have to limit our response to this letter.

The 1984 election. Lord Kennet alleges that Arturo Cruz had been daunted and deterred by the obstacles facing him in the election, implying also that Mr. Cruz and his allies were unprepared "to get their hands dirty in democratic politics on the ground." These allegations seem a bit unfair to this honest democrat and former Sandinista leader. Incidentally, Mr. Cruz recently conceded that he made a tactical error by not participating in the elections, as this would have given the opposition more public exposure. But his participation would not have altered the outcome. In case Lord Kennet is unaware of it, the FSLN leaders are on record as having asserted that they would never allow the opposition to prevail in elections. If any group was daunted by the prospect of an open and fair competition, it was the FSLN leaders, and this is why they took five years to organize the elections. The careful groundwork they laid for them ensured that the contest would be no exercise in democratic politics "a la Gran Bretaña." The "reality of choice" facing the Nicaraguans was more akin to that which existed in East-Central Europe (Czechoslovakia and Hungary) between 1945 and 1948. There also the opposition was tolerated but restrained from posing a meaningful alternative by the selective use of repressive measures of a creeping totalitarianism.

Public ownership of land. The figures cited in the article are based almost exclusively on published Sandinista sources. Those that are not were derived from interviews conducted in Managua in confidentiality.

Armed forces. The threat to Costa Rica from Nicaragua under the FSLN is more serious than under Somoza because of the FSLN's stated desire to support revolution throughout Central America (see the *General Platform of the FSLN*). This is what is new under the FSLN.

Contras. The latest events in Nicaragua as well as in Afghanistan and Angola and the recent bloodshed in "socialist-oriented" South Yemen support our contention that the anti-Sandinista insurgencies are symptomatic of conditions created by most Leninist-oriented regimes in the Third World.

It is too simple to identify the contras as "rightwing insurgents" and the FSLN government as "nationalist" and "leftwing." This characterization ignores the existence of UNO (National Unification Union), led by democrats such as Arturo Cruz and Alfonso Robelo, of social democrats like Alfredo César, who heads the left-leaning Southern Opposition Bloc (BOS) of the anti-FSLN insurgency, and a whole host of guerrilla leaders resembling the legendary revolutionary commander Eden Pastora. It also does not take into account the hundreds of dissatisfied former Sandinistas or thousands of other Nicaraguans from all walks of life in both the northern and southern branches of the resistance. These people battle the FSLN National Directorate because of their conviction that it has betrayed the revolution that all of them supported.

Finally, to say that the US objects to the Sandinistas because they do not conform to the "approved pattern, namely rightwing government and leftwing insurgency," is to keep a very "distant eye" on the matter, indeed. Perhaps Lord Kennet underestimates the willingness of US policy-makers to learn from previous mistakes in supporting rightwing dictatorships. After all, the US did withdraw crucial support from Somoza; more recently, it helped to dismantle the dictatorships in both Haiti and the Philippines.

China. The fact that the FSLN established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in the fall of 1985 does not affect our conclusions. This opening by the FSLN occurred after six years of refusal to deal with Beijing, in spite of appeals by some opposition leaders in favor of diplomatic relations and, more important, after a considerable improvement in Sino-Soviet relations. If Lord Kennet consults some of the secret documents uncovered in Grenada, he will find that in 1981 the PRC was listed by the NJM (New Jewel Movement) leaders as one of the "countries with which Grenada does not wish to develop close relations" (See "List of Countries with Which Grenada Does not Wish to Develp Close Relations," in Jiri Valenta and Herbert J. Ellison, Eds., *Grenada and Soviet/Cuban Policy: Internal Crisis and U.S./O.E.C.S. Intervention,* Boulder, Co, Westview Press, 1986, p. 463). A similar list almost certainly existed as of 1981 in Managua, with whose leaders the NJM had developed close ties. The available evidence about the FSLN decision to establish diplomatic ties with China points to a strong parallelism with, if not dependence on, Moscow in foreign policy matters. In

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some circles this is known as "proletarian internationalism."

Cockeyed conclusion. We found Lord Kennet's concluding remarks a bit in the vein of English humor. For what, after all, is there to criticize but the conclusions when all else is in order, or nearly so? More seriously, Lord Kennet is surely not a student of comparative communism or he would not have stated that "communism [in Eastern Europe] was imposed by the Soviet army." Although true in many instances, it was certainly not in the case of Yugoslavia or Albania, countries which had large and influential communist parties by 1945. Nor was the Soviet army deployed in Czechoslovakia prior to the invasion of 1968, in China in the post–World War II period, or in Nicaragua after 1979. Moreover, as the Cuban trajectory illustrates, the presence of the Soviet army is not always a *sine qua non* for building a Leninist system, and the Leninist system is adaptable to widely varying cultural and physical conditions.

The issues here are not just the Soviet military presence and a country's particular geography, but also the different models of communism. In the case of the FSLN, there has been an increasing emulation of the more repressive models and disregard for the early, albeit unsuccessful attempts to pluralize communism in Hungary and in Czechoslovakia and, more recently, in Poland, and the experiments with reform communism occurring today in Hungary, Yugoslavia, and China. Thus, not surprisingly, the FSLN has closest relations with the USSR, Cuba, East Germany, and Bulgaria.

This is so because the FSLN leaders are not just "nationalist leftwing revolutionaries," as they might appear to the more "distant eye" of some nonetheless well-intentioned West European observers. The evidence points to the fact that most, if not all, of the nine *comandantes* who effectively monopolize power in Nicaragua are (in spite of tactical differences) dedicated pro-Soviet and/or pro-Cuban Leninists who still have not digested or who have chosen to ignore the experiences of so-called deviant communist leaders and parties that have sometimes dared to challenge the Soviet model. The Soviet army is indeed not inside Nicaragua, but there are plenty of Cuban, Bulgarian, and East German advisers and ample Soviet arms to help the FSLN ensure Nicaragua's Leninist orientation. It is also true that the FSLN leaders may not use the word communist to describe themselves, but, when frank, they have proudly described themselves more "scientifically" as Marxist-Leninists. Incidentally, the Leninist orientation and the military buildup preceded the Reagan administration.

JIRI AND
VIRGINIA VALENTA
Miami, FL

CORRECTION

The first five lines of text in column 1, page 95 of Dale Herspring's essay-review of "Soviet Military Politics" in the March-April 1986 issue of *Problems of Communism* were inadvertently garbled. The first two lines should have completed the sentence begun at the end of page 94, and the fourth and fifth lines should not have been repeated. We provide the corrected text of these lines below:

> resources for the military, it is the Politburo that has the final say.
>
> A second area of general agreement is that the Soviet military's primary source of authority in national

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